The Stamps & Postal History of Poonch

George Harell

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Map on title page—Poonch (Punch) City. 'Kahu ta {Kahuta}' is in British India slightly south of Rawalpindi. Reproduced from *The Century Atlas,* India Northern, copyright 1897.

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This book was produced as a facsimile of the website: poonchstamps.com; PDFs were made of the pages, and imported into files that could be printed as a book. It is an imperfect method… but conveys the information.

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This book is dedicated to my
wonderful wife, Carol,
and to the memory
of Professor Frits Staal.

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About the Author

George Harell is a retired Radiologist who taught at Stanford University (Life Tenure) and then entered into private practice. The bold colors, aesthetic designs and exotic locale attracted him to the stamps of Poonch.

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Introduction

The purpose of the website this book is based upon is to encourage research into the stamps and postal history of Poonch.

The site was built on the enduring foundations constructed by previous writers on Poonch including S.H. Godfrey, E.B. Evans, F.M. Douie, A.J. Sefi, L.E. Dawson, F. Staal, A. Bard and W. Hellrigl.

A number of collectors, who may not have published their findings but have contributed eminently to a better understanding of Poonch, include D.P. Masson, H.D.S. Haverbeck, H. Garratt-Adams and Dan Walker.

Some of the material on the site is taken from notes that I compiled of the literature in the mid-1980s supplanted by items of Poonch postal history then in my collection. Additional material came from notes made of several collections including the postal history in the great Garratt-Adams collection which Christie's Robson Lowe offered in 1993. Since then important and key articles on the postal history of Poonch were written by Professor Frits Staal and Mr. Anthony Bard, and I have borrowed heavily from their research.

What follows below is an endeavor which, I hope, will lead to a better understanding of the stamps and postal history of Poonch. The current draft contains multiple errors: some from transcription, others from misinterpretation and speculation and yet others from gaps or errors in source material. Some of the data looks better than it is, i.e., a date of use of 1889-1890 may represent one example known to me in 1889 and one in 1890. It is my hope that users of the website will send suggestions, corrections and images of interesting material that may further an understanding of the stamps and postal history of Poonch.

I wish to thank Mr. Dan Walker for allowing me to use numerous images from his highly important collection of Poonch and for his help with the 'Aniline Rose' stamps; my thanks to Dr. Philip Kinns for his always highly expert and timely help especially in identifying for me a number of the forgeries of Poonch. Any errors that may have occurred are mine alone. My deep appreciation also to Dr. Geoffrey Eibl-Kaye FRPSL for allowing me to use **Fig. 34d** and **Fig. 81** from his articles and the Catalogue of the RPSL Museum. Many thanks also to Mr. Sunil Kumar and Mrs. Carol von der Lin for their help with various translations, and to Mr. John Schneider for introducing me to some of the subtitles of the papers used by the Poonch State Post Office. My gratitude also goes to Ms. Kate Weisel for turning a website into this bound book; and finally I would like to say 'many, many thanks' to Ms. Kim Gladow whose expert help in both designing the original web site and teaching me to use the current one has been a most enjoyable and satisfying experience.

G. Harell
February 2013.

The Stamps

Rajit Singh "Lion of the Punjab" awarded Jammu and Kashmir to his general, Gulab Singh and Poonch to Gulab's younger brother, Dhyan Singh. One of Dhyan Singh's sons, Raja Moti Singh (1859-1892) ruled during most of the quarter century that Poonch issued postage stamps. He was succeeded by a son, Buldeo Singh who reigned during the last two years (1892-1894) that Poonch had a State Post Office[1]. Poonch is small, about 2% of the size of Jammu and Kashmir and lies on the Western side of Kashmir.

The First, Second and Third Designs

1876 6 pie red (SG 1)

The stamp measures 22 x 21mm and is printed on yellowish white, wove paper[2] **(Fig. 1)**. The innermost circle shows the denomination: 6 pai (6 pies = ½ Anna) in Persian[2]. The year date 1933 in the Samvat dating system corresponds to 1876.

Persian and Nagari scripts read "seal stamp, state, Poonch, 1876"[2]. The entire design is enclosed by double frame lines which are usually blurred into one line. The outer panel has 5 rosettes within circles. Two rosettes are at the left end of the bottom panel[2]. The presence of the double rosettes in the left corner is often the feature that easily helps identify this stamp when the value is obscured. The 1876 6 p. may look somewhat atypical if over inked **(Fig. 2)**.

— Fig.1. 1876 6p. red on yellowish white coarse paper. Double frame lines. These are frequently blurred.

Unused copies 1876 6 pie red (SG 1): Only 4 unused are reported[2,5,5a] **(Fig. 3, 7a)**.

Used copies of 1876 6 pie red: Estimated in the hundreds. The used stamp is only somewhat scarce on or off cover.

Early copies of the 1876 6 pie red show handwritten cancellation; copies used later generally are obliterated with the First Poonch Seal except for a period in 1882-1883 and possibly into early 1884 **(Fig 60b)** when hand canceling was again used[6].

Date of Use of SG 1: July 1878-October 1884[5].
The earliest reported use of SG 1 on cover is July 20, 1878 (dated in the Samvat calender manuscript 6 Sawan 1935)[6]. The SG 1 is hand canceled and is on a 1 Anna India QV postal stationery envelope with the embossed lion on the back. The First Poonch seal is used as an endorsement and a Kahuta CDS as transit mark. The cover traveled to Choya Saidan Shah via Rawalpindi and Pind Dadan Kahn[6]. Other early copies of SG 1 on cover are dated August 5, 1878[2] and November 1878[5].

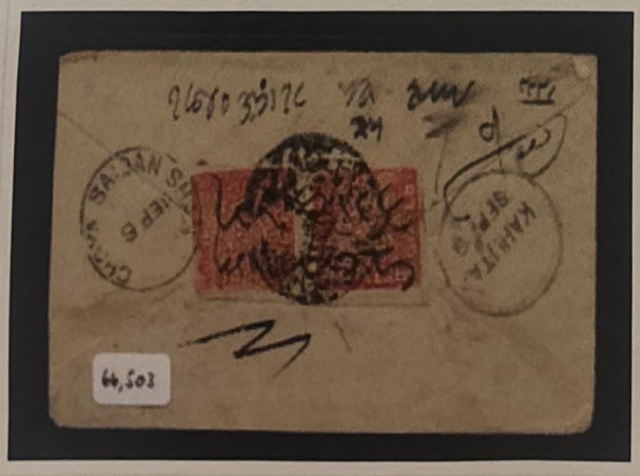
— Fig. 2. 1876 6p.

— Fig. 3. Unused 1876 6p. Reproduced from the Robson Lowe Auction January 10, 1967, lot 488.

— Fig. 4. 1876 6p. Three copies = one and half Anna. Tied by First Poonch seal. 2 Anna in British India stamps (1 and 1/2 Anna on back). Dated Bhadon 9 1938= August 23, 1881. Also dated in Merchant Script '1938'= 1881-1882. To Choya Saidan.

The latest recorded date of use of SG 1 is October 1884[5]. Multiple examples of the first issue on cover are rare, and the most copies of the 1876 6-pie recorded on the same cover is three[7] **(Fig. 4)**. A semi tete-beche pair (one stamp sideways) is known used on a cover dated in merchant script Samvat '1940' to Choya Saidan Shah. The year date has not been previously recognized. The combination of markings probably dates the cover to Sept 1883 **(Fig. 5a, 5b)**.

— Fig. 5a. The 1876 6p. pair, one stamp sideways (SG 1a). Hand dated in Merchant Script at bottom S. "1940". The combination of marking and year date make September 1883 most likely. Image kindly provided by Mr. I. Chatterjee. Ex Douie, Ex Chatterjee collection.



— Fig 5b. 1876 6p. pair, one stamp sideways on a cover probably mailed Sept 1883. Image provided by and courtesy of Mr. I. Chatterjee.

1877 ½ Anna red (SG 1a)

The stamp measures 19 x 17 mm and is on yellowish-white wove paper and is more rectangular as compared to the almost square SG 1[5]. The ½ Anna denomination is present in a small inner oval rather than the circle of the 1876 6p[5]. The year date (which is very hard to identify in the few copies known) is 1934 in the Samvat calender corresponding to AD 1877[2]. A total of two rosettes are reported present. One is said to be at the [viewer's] left end of the top panel and one inside a circle at the left end of the bottom panel[2]. The 'rosette in circle' in the left end of the lower panel is readily identifiable; the presence of the upper left panel rosette is problematical. In the few copies of SG 1a that I have seen, the area of the rosette is either a blank space or is densely inked and a rosette is not identifiable. **(Fig. 6, 6a)**.

— Fig.6. 1877 1/2 Anna (SG 1a)

— Fig . 6a. The uncancelled 1877 1/2 Anna (SG 1a) attached to a cover. Image courtesy of Mr. Dan Walker.

Unused: 2 copies of SG 1a are reported[2,31,32] **(Fig. 6, 6a)**. One of the two unused stamps known is mounted on a cover but is uncanceled **(Fig. 6a)**.

Used: two copies have been recorded in the literature[2,8,38] **(Fig. 6b)**. A third used copy on cover has been described and was auctioned in March 2011[30]. It shows a probable Indo-Persian hand-written date S [19]36 = 1879 and May arrival CDS.

The canceled copies of the 1877 ½ Anna (SG 1a) are tied to their covers by handwritten crosses or notations.

The earliest recorded use of the 1877 ½ Anna is 10 June 1879 (6 Har 1936) or possibly May 1879[30]; the latest: 1 October 1882[2].

— Fig. 6b. 1877 1/2 Anna(SG 1a) canceled by a hand writtten notation in Merchant Script on a 1/2 Anna stationery envelope to Rawalpindi. Image reproduced from Spink Oct 18 2001 Lot 857.

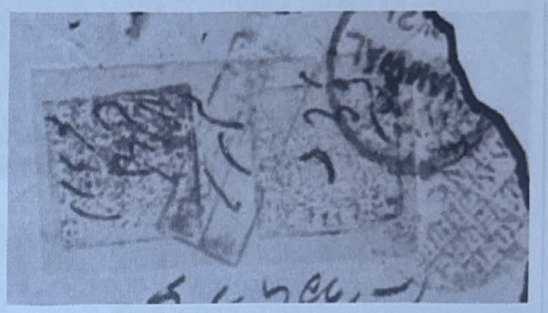
1879 ½ Anna (SG 2)

The stamp measures 21 x 19 mm and is printed on yellowish-white wove paper. The value, ½ Anna in Indo-Persian, is considerably larger than the 6 pie value of SG 1 or the ½ Anna of the 1877[2,5]. The date is now Samvat "1936" which is 1879[2]. The Indo-Persian value characters are set lower in the oval[5]. One rosette is present near the left end of the lower panel. The stamp has two frame lines which may blur into one.

Unused: 1 copy has been published[2]. It was subsequently certified by the BPA as a forgery.

Used: about 9 used copies reported[2] **(Fig 7, 7b)**. The best known 1879 1/2 Anna (SG 2) is the used pair on piece hand-canceled and tied by the First Seal Obliterator and 'Postage Due' and arrival date CDS that Ferrari supposedly exchanged with Tapling for an unused Mauritius 2d "Post Office" **(Fig. 7)**.

The Earliest use reported for SG 2 on cover is: 16 April 1880 and the latest recorded is 9 June 1885[2].



— Fig. 7. 1879 1/2 Anna pair used . This pair was part of the Ferrari and Tapling exchange for an unused Mauritius 2d. Post Office. Reproduced from the Robson Lowe Auction January 10, 1967, lot 499.

The First, Second And Third Designs Compared

— Fig. 7a The 1876 6p.(SG1). The 1877 ½ Anna (SG 1a) and the 1879 ½ Anna proof (Proof SG 2). Note the inner oval size is larger in SG 2 proof than SG 1a. Image SG1 courtesy of Frits Staal, image of SG 1a and the proof of SG2 courtesy of Dan Walker.

— Fig. 7b. The 1879 1/2Anna red (SG 2) used on a cover hand dated in Persian S. '1937'. Using the solar calender for April 16, the year date is '1880'. Image courtesy of Mr. Dan Walker.

Proofs of the First Designs

Two First Period proofs were found in the proof book of the seal cutter Rahat Ju:

A. Professor Staal has reported that the ½ Anna Proof in black dated S.'1936' is identical to the issued stamp of 1879[2] (SG 2).

B. This proof somewhat resembles SG 2 but differs in several ways including: a) the value is 1 Anna instead of 1/2 Anna; b) the date in Persian is S. 1933=1876 instead of S. 1936; c) different numbers of rosettes are present; and d) the Nagari for "Poonch" is translated by various authorities to read either "Paloch"[2] or "Punn(o)ch"[36]. The Nagari spelling variant found on the 1 Anna proof is also found on the issued 1p. stamps[36] **(Fig. 8a).**

— Fig 8a. The One Anna Proof in Black. Image courtesy of Dan Walker.

— Fig. 8b. The 1/2 Anna Proof in black. Image courtesy of Dan Walker.

Defacement of the Dies of SG 1, 1a, 2

No record of the defacement of these dies has been recorded.

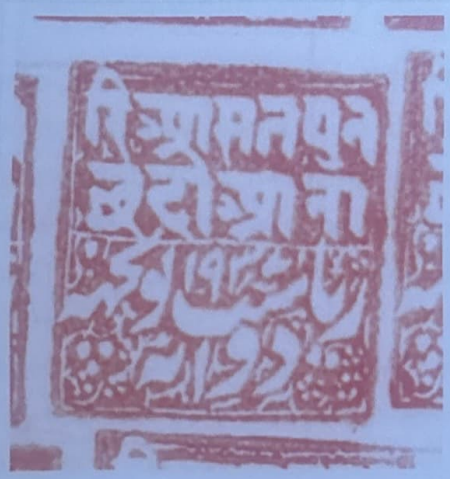
The Fourth Designs

These stamps are quite different in design from the first 3 issues and were originally issued in 1880 in 1/2, 1, 2 and 4 Anna denominations. An additional value (1 pice) was subsequently added in 1886 or early 1887 for use on post cards[5] **(Fig. 9-13)**.

Distinguishing features among the 4th Issue stamps include: 1) their color: red for routine postal use (SG 3-56b) and black for Service stamps (SG 01-010); 2) their denominations; 3) the inks: a) watercolor, and b) aniline; 4) their papers.

— Fig. 9. The 1/2 Anna on white laid batonne paper.

— Fig. 10. The 1 Anna on white laid batonne paper.



— Fig. 11. The 2 Anna on white laid batonne paper.

— Fig. 13. The 1p. on white laid batonne paper.

— Fig. 12. The 4 Anna on white laid batonne paper.

It is the last feature – the papers – that is most vexing and contributes to either the charm or the considerable frustration in studying Poonch stamps. The relatively large number of paper varieties and the various colors, some of which are difficult to separate, pose an intellectual effort in identification that some find challenging and others find trivial and annoying.

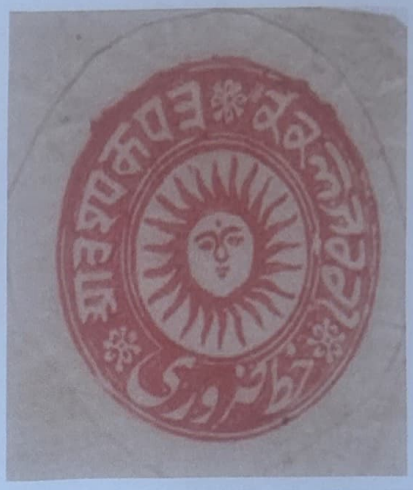
The effort to classify the various paper colors used in the fourth Issue is further compounded by chemical changes, such as induced by sunlight and heat, which may alter paper color. The early literature suggests that the purchase of papers by the State Post Office was hap-hazardous and subitaneous. The collector who feels uncomfortable when a stamp is not readily identifiable may find Poonch frustrating.

Although the Stanley Gibbons British Commonwealth catalog is a very good reference, it does not cover some of the paper varieties that are found.

Second Design Proofs

Proofs of the 4th Issue. ½ Anna and 4 Anna stamps printed in black were found in the proof book of Rahat Ju[25] **(Fig. 13a)**. Rahat Ju also designed the Dak Zauri and a number of the Rectangulars of Jammu and Kashmir[2] **(Fig. 13b)**.

— Fig 13a. Proofs of the 1/2 Anna 4th design and the 4 Anna 4th design. Images courtesy of Dan Walker.



— Fig. 13b. The Dak Zauri (Kakal Zaruri *) found in the engraver Rahut Ju's specimen book. *The Dogri preferred spelling suggested by Mrs. Carol Vonderlin.

(SG 3-6) Yellowish White Wove Paper

The first complete set of four stamps (½, 1, 2 and 4 Anna) (SG 3-6) is inscribed '1880'[8]. The stamps are square and a horizontal line divides them into two panels. In the upper half the Nagari reads, "State of Poonch" followed by the value. In the lower half is a similar inscription in Persian with the addition of the Samvat date 1937 (AD 1880)[5]. The paper of SG 3-6 is "the same coarse yellowish wove" generally used for SG 1-6. Douie noted that yellowish white wove paper continued in use until 1887[5].

Used on Cover: An early 1/2 Anna on yellowish white wove (SG 3) cover has arrival CDS of "Choya-Sai-Dansharh" 11 April 1884[5,9]. Thus, a considerable time period elapsed from the '1880' on the die and the appearance of these stamps in postal use.

½ Anna on yellowish white wove used on covers: ~April 1884-January1886[9], October 1886- Dec 1887[6,9] **(Fig. 14)**.

— Fig.14. 1885 December 1/2 Anna on yellowish white wove paper oblierated by the First Poonch Seal. (SG3).

— Fig 14a. The 1 Anna on yellowish white, wove paper SG 4.

Douie postulated that the ½ Anna (SG3) was not the first 4th issue stamp on yellowish white wove paper but that the higher values were issued first based on his finding of "pieces showing combinations of the first issue used in conjunction with both the one Anna and two Anna values" [of the 4th. issue][5].

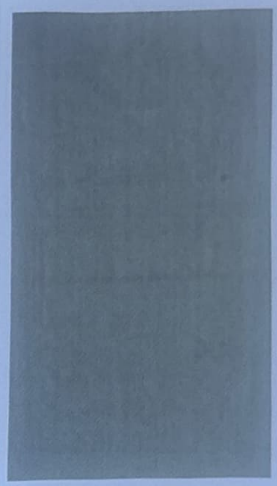
1 Anna: A cover is known with a 5 one Anna fourth issue stamps tied by the First Poonch Seal sent to Amritsar and dated August 8, 1883[9]. This date is about 9 months earlier than the earliest recorded for the ½ Anna. Whereas it can be questioned whether this very early date is accurate, it may well be because the 'Kahuta' date stamp on this cover does not contain the year date suggesting that the 1 Anna was introduced prior to March 1884.

2 Anna: A registered cover with two 2 Anna on yellowish white wove paper sent to Major Evans by the Poonch Postmaster dated April 20, 1885 is known **(Fig. 15)**. A 2 Anna on a cover dated July 84 has also been seen[9].

4 Anna: A 4 Anna used stamp on yellowish white wove paper obliterated with the First Poonch seal is known[9].

At this point, the chronology of the various papers listed by Stanley Gibbons becomes confusing and problematical. The main reason for this is that several somewhat similar papers were used for printing within a short time period. These papers included the toned wove batonne papers (SG 7-10) and white laid or white ribbed papers of (SG 11-15) **(Fig. 15a)**. Douie noted, "There is little doubt that several kinds of thin batonne paper were used indiscriminately at this period"[5]. The batonne papers used were of several varieties, laid, ribbed [SG 11-15] , and wove [SG 7-10]. It is probable that there was no intention on the part of the authorities to make any change, but that any white or whitish thin paper procurable was used indiscriminately. Possibly it would be more satisfactory to describe the issues as on thin batonne paper, white or toned"[5].

— Fig. 15. The 2 Anna on yellowish white wove on an 1885 cover to England.



— Fig. 15a. Laid lines and batonne lines. Back of the 4 Anna on blue green laid batonne showing horizontal and vertical widely spaced batonne lines and vertically oriented closely spaced laid lines.

Although ½ stamps on batonne papers were introduced by 1885, ½ Anna stamps printed on yellow white wove paper were concomitantly used and remained employed into late 1887[5,8].

1885 SG 7-10 Toned Wove Batonne Paper

The stamps on this paper (toned wove batonne SG 7-10) are sometimes gummed[5] **(Fig. 16-17)**.

The ½ Anna on cover is seen used in October 1885[9]. Toned wove batonne paper was again used in 1891-93. Stamps from 1891-93 on toned wove batonne paper may be recognized if they are impressed with "Under Quarter Tola", which was not applied to the earlier sheets[5].

— Fig. 16 the 1/2 Anna on toned wove batonne paper. These stamps are sometimes gummed. (SG7)

— Fig. 17 The back of the stamp in fig. 16. The stamp is gummed.

SG 12-15 White Laid Batonne or Ribbed Batonne (Fig. 9-13)

Laid lines in water mark fluid may usually be seen on SG 12 when it is on cover. Occasionally laid lines may be seen when the stamp is on cover even without watermark fluid. An early use of the ½ Anna on thin laid batonne paper is recorded on a cover back of October 1885 **(Fig. 18)**. Another early use is reported on a cover dated late November 1885[5]. White laid batonne paper was again used with some frequency during 1891-August 1894 with an occasional earlier use from November 1888 **(Fig. 18a,19).**

— Fig. 18. 1885 Oct cover back 1/2 Anna white on laid paper. Tied by Poonch First Seal. A partial J&K State P.O. 'Masul' Postage Due cachet and State cds. An early use of SG 12.

— Fig. 18a. 1888 August 1/2 Anna red on white, laid batonne (SG12). Most are seen in 1891 and later.

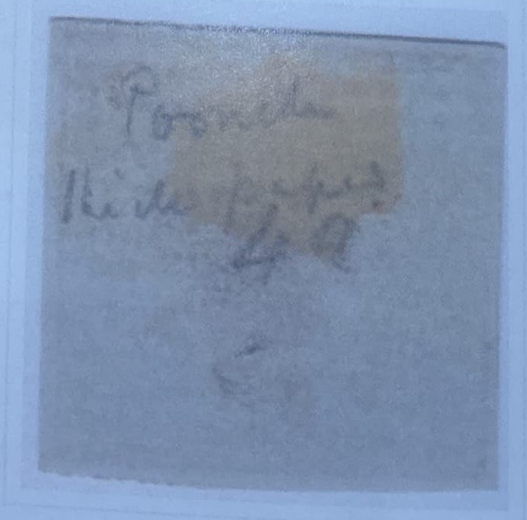
— Fig. 19 1894 August. Late use of the 1/2 Anna on white, laid batonne (SG 12).

1885 Unlisted Four Stamps on Thick Azure Paper

In April 1885, Major Evans received four different stamps mailed to him from the Poonch Postmaster in a letter that contained ½ (10 copies), 2 (9 copies), and 4 (8 copies) Anna stamps on very thick azure laid paper **(Fig. 20-22)**. The letter also contained a very clearly printed 1 Anna (9 copies) with wide margins on yellowish or toned wove paper[10]. The status of the stamps received by Major Evans is uncertain. Major Godfrey considered them issued stamps. Since they have not been found used on cover or even obliterated, some experts classify these as 'proofs'.

— Fig. 20. 1885 cover to Major Evans which contained 1/2, 2, and 4 Anna stamps on Azure blue laid paper and a very clearly printed 1 Anna on yellowish wove.

— Fig. 21. The 4 Anna on thick Azure laid paper.



— Fig. 22 Back of the 4 Anna on thick, stiff Azure laid paper. Sent by the Poonch Postmaster to Major Evans in 1885.

1886 SG 22-26 White Laid Paper

About 1886 SG 22 -26 on medium white laid to thick laid paper appeared. This paper may be quite stiff[8]. The Stanley Gibbons catalog does not list these used although they have been recorded[5].

½ Anna Used: the earliest recorded used ½ Anna (SG 23) is on a cover dated December 29, 1886 which was delivered to Sialkot[5].

1 Anna used. A 1 Anna originally on piece is recorded[5].

1886-1887 (SG 11) 1 p. on White Laid Batonne

A 1 p. (¼ Anna) value on white laid batonne paper was introduced for postcards[5] **(Fig. 13)**. The stamp measures 20 x 20 mm and is almost similar to the 1876 6 pie red (SG 1). The value in the small inner circle was wrongly engraved as 1 pie (Ek pai = 1/12 Anna), instead of 1 pice or 1 piasa = 1/4 Anna. The post card rate was ¼ Anna. Godfrey states that this mistake was copied from an obsolete East India Company's coin[4].

The previous Poonch stamp dies had been engraved on brass by Rahat Ju[4]. The new 1p. value was engraved on dark green stone (identified as either 'bloodstone'[14] or 'quartz' family[35]) by a stone cutter whose name is not certain[4,8].

The 1 p. on white laid batonne (SG 11) was first recorded in May 1887[5]. Douie had a number of 1 p. copies obliterated with the First Poonch Seal suggesting that the 1 p. was in use possibly somewhat earlier[5].

From this point on, the dates of use for various stamps cataloged by Stanley Gibbons become far less certain. Although it is usually possible to correctly identify both the color of the stamp paper and the stamp ink on cover, it is often not possible to differentiate the paper type: i.e.: wove, wove batonne, laid and laid batonne. Several important writers on Poonch philately maintained that the selection of papers was haphazard and indiscriminate and was dictated by what was available in the market place at the time the State Post Office purchased new supplies of paper. Captain Godfrey, who was Assistant Resident for Jammu and Kashmir, and wrote several early articles on Poonch philately noted that, "No official record was kept of any change in the color of the paper, possibly, because the niceties of philately were not appreciated in Poonch. Stamps of the same value but of different shades and on different papers are frequently found on the same document and were purchasable at the Poonch post office"[4].

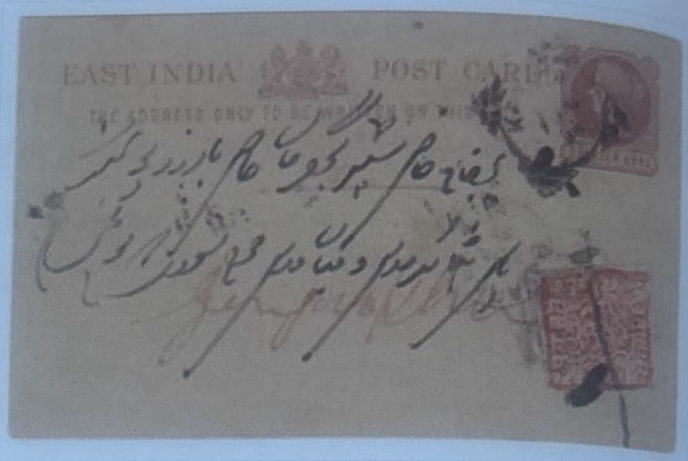
However, Douie thought that, although prior to 1887 the use of various colored paper for different values was possibly haphazard, starting in 1887, he concluded that it was the general intention of the Poonch officials to assign one paper color to each stamp value and that this rule was adhered to unless there was a shortage of the correct paper as probably occurred in the weeks prior to the end of 1894[5].

1/2 a. white or toned

1 a green or blue green

2 a. lavender

4 a. yellow or orange buff



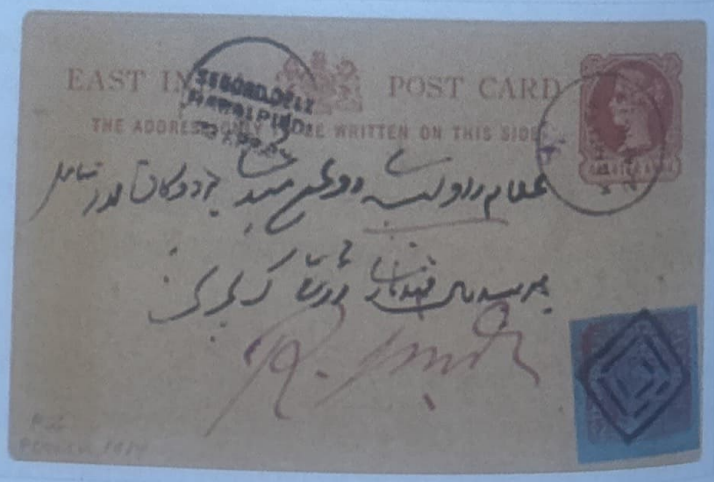
— Fig. 24a. 1p on white paper obliterated with the Poonch State Post Office three box square . The 1/4a QV is canceled with the BI Type 5 'Circle in Square' dated '1 JA 96'. A Gujharkhan arrival CDS '3 JA 95.' The '1 JA 96' is likely to be incorrect by a full year.

Douie compiled a chronological listing for the 1 p. and ½ Anna postally used which included paper types. It is in Appendix 1. I have simplified Douie's information by omitting the paper types, for example, 'laid', or wove batonne, etc., and arranging the listing only by paper color, ink color (red or rose), thickness (thick or thin) and occasionally paper surface which are qualities the collector can usually identify without lifting the stamp from the cover. I have expanded the listing to include higher values but have not, as yet, included data from some auction catalogs. A 'P' and a number refer to the listing found under Philatelic Covers. The reader is hopefully aware that even with this simplified listing serious mis-categorization will occur. It is sometimes difficult to decide if a paper, which is now toned, was originally white or toned, is thick or thin or even to identify its original paper color! On occasion, I have mentioned that a paper is "laid" if the laid lines can be seen on the cover. The data below giving date ranges are partly from examples in my collection but also rely on auction catalogs and descriptions by various writers and auction describers. The amount of interobservor error and variance is unknown but is probably considerable. "cum grano salis."

1 p.

White paper (thin): Early 1887-July 1887, Jan 1, 1895[5] **(Fig. 24a)**.

Blue: July 1887-July 16, 1888, September 1888-May 1889, May 1894-December 1894 **(Fig. 25)**.



— Fig. 25. 1889 April. 1p. red on blue paper to Rawalpindi.

Aniline dyes: July 1887-July 16 1888 **(Fig. 26)**. Also found occasionally in the 1890s.

Yellow and Orange Buff: May 1888[9]-August 1888, May 1890-August 1894 **(Fig. 27)**.

Lilac: November-December 1894 **(Fig. 28)**.

Gray-blue: 24 December 1894[27], Dec: 1894[11], January 5, 1895[27].

1/2 Anna

Yellowish white paper coarse: April 1884-December 1885, October 1886-December 1887.

Yellow or Orange Buff: January 1886-September 1886, July 1887, April 1892[1] **(Fig. 29)**.

Yellow-green: early in the period starting September 1887.

Thick whitish or toned papers between October 1886-July 1887, April 1891[9], August 1893 **(Fig. 29a)**.

Thin white or toned papers: 1885, April 1888-onward. Toned white paper more likely in 1891-93, 1894[9].

Bluish paper: 1894[9].

Blue-green: July 1891 (P3).

Aniline dyes: September 1887-April 1888, May 1, 1888, October 1892 (P2), May 1893.

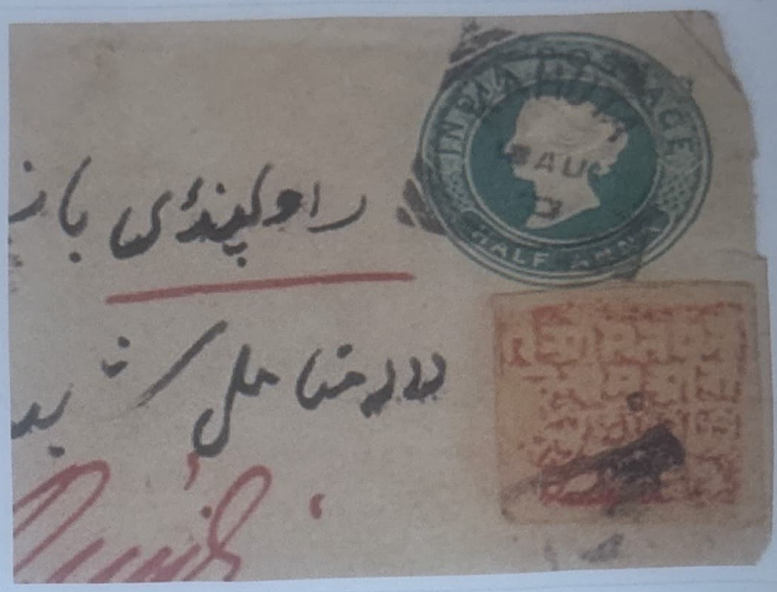
In general, thin papers occasionally found between April 1884-December 1885. Thin papers used nearly exclusively with only occasional exception from August-September 1888 to the close of the Poonch State Post Office at the end of 1894.

— Fig. 26. '1888 16 July' 1p. 'rose' on blue paper.

— Fig. 27. 1891 1p. yellow.

— Fig. 28. 1894 November 1 p. lilac.

— Fig. 29. 1886 1/2 Anna on yellow. First Poonch Seal.



— Fig. 29a. 1893 August 1/2 Anna on thick, buff paper.

1 Anna

Yellowish white paper: 1884.
White paper: 1889 (P-4).
Green: Feb 18, 1893[27].
Blue-green: February 1891-July 1891 (P-3), September 1894[9].
Blue: October 1893[27].

2 Anna

Yellowish white paper: 1885 (Fig. 15).
Lilac: 1891.
Lavender: April 1886[27], October 1893[27].

4 Anna

Yellow: 1887[26], October 1889[22], 1892 (P-2).

Officials

The 1 p., 1/2, 2 and 4 Anna were printed in black for official use on both toned wove and white laid batonne papers. Both papers were probably used indiscriminately. Unused copies are occasionally found gummed.

Dates of Use: An early cover from Poonch to Srinagar bearing a 1/2 Official and dated 3 Assu 1944 (18 September 1887) is reported[6].

"The 'Service' stamps were printed from the same dies as the 'ordinary stamps' but were printed in black instead of in red. They appear to have been used purely for postal purposes[12].

— Fig. 33. 1892 1p. x2 on white paper paying the State 1/2 Anna letter rate.

— Fig. 34. 1891 November 1 and 2 Anna Officials on white laid paper on a cover with 3 Annas (2 and 1 Anna) QV stamps.

1887 Official on White Paper

1p. black: 1892 **(Fig. 33)**, Aug 1892[27].
½ Anna black: October 1892[27], May-September 1893.
1 Anna black: September 1891[27], November 1891, August 1892[27], October 1892 (P2), Sept 1893, July 1894 **(Fig. 34)**.
2 Anna black: November 1891-1892 (P2) **(Fig. 34)**.
4 Anna black: November 1891; July 1894.

Official 1887 on Toned Paper

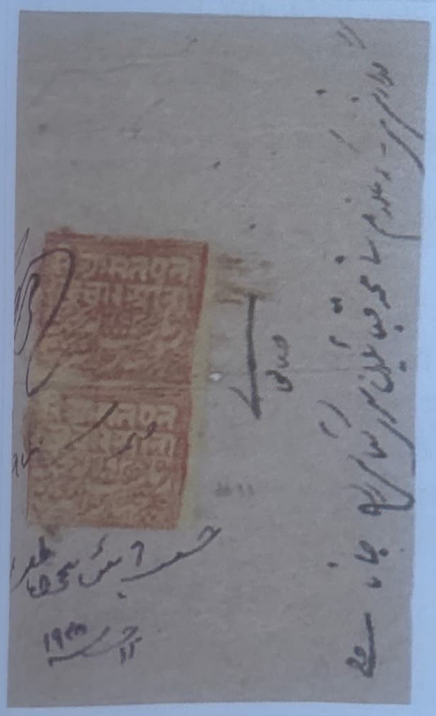
1p. black: November 1891.
1p. black pair one stamp sideways: November 1893.
1/2 Anna black: April 1890[27].
1 Anna black: June 1894.
4 Anna black: June 1894.

Uncatalogued Stamps

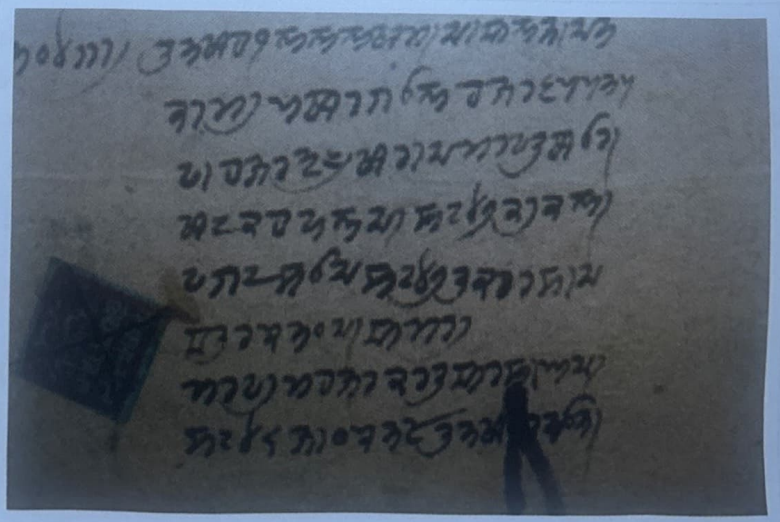
Most Poonch stamp collectors will eventually discover Poonch stamps with papers that do not fit the Stanley Gibbons catalog description. Many of these will be forgeries.

A number of Poonch stamps exist, however, that were produced from the original 4th issue dies but are on uncatalogued papers. The origin of such stamps is probably multi-factorial. The Poonch State Post Office closed at the end of 1894. The dies of the 1/4 Anna, 1/2 Anna and 2 Anna were handed over to Capt. Godfrey in 1896. The 1 Anna and 4 Anna were not delivered until 1898 when all the 4th issue dies were defaced. This left an approximately 2-4 year period after the close of the State Post Office in which Poonch stamps could have been produced from the original dies for both legitimate fiscal and clandestine use. There is good evidence that the 4th issue dies were used to produce stamps for use as revenues **(Fig. 34a, 34b, 36c)**.

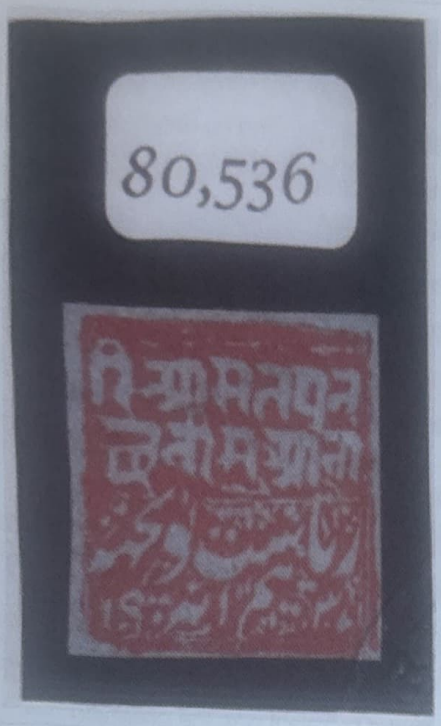
Godfrey, who was the Assistant Resident in Kashmir, was convinced that "Poonch stamps though originally cut for postal employment ultimately became postage and revenue labels"[12]. Godfrey believed that the 1p. was the only 4th issue stamp that was not used fiscally[25]. F.B. O'Shea, who had observed the printing of Poonch postage stamps, noted in an article published in January 1898, "The 4-anna and 1-anna stamps are still struck and used for revenue purposes"[13]. Even allowing for some lag between the completion of O'Shea's manuscript and its publication, the weight of published evidence is that some 4th issue Poonch stamps were both produced and utilized as revenues after the close of the State Post Office.



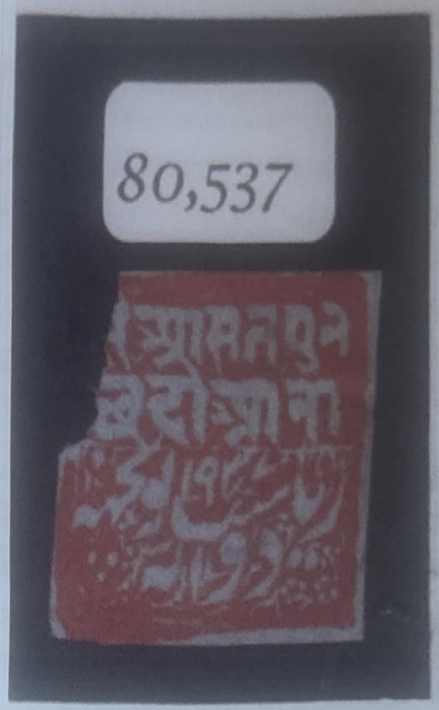
– Fig. 34a. Fiscal Usage 4 Anna Yellow . Indo-Persian script. Dated in the Hindu solar calendar Cait 1948 = March 1892.



— Fig. 34b. Fiscal Use of the 1 Anna. No year date is identified in the Dogri-Takri script.



— Fig. 34c. Uncatalogued 1/2 Anna on blue wove battonne paper (SG 53-54 group). BPA certificate 2012.



— Fig. 34d. Uncatalogued 2 Anna on blue wove batonne paper (SG 53-54 group). BPA certificate 2012.

Garratt-Adams described several stamps in his collection as 'fiscals' including a 4 Anna on greenish paper with coarse, indistinct laid lines; a 4 Anna on thin, greenish wove; a 1 Anna on coarse greenish laid with the laid lines on several examples varying from indistinct to distinct; and a 1 Anna on blue-green wove batonne[9]. None of these showed obliteration with the 3 square and most had handwritten notations in Indo-Persian with numbers from '53' to '57' which may be Samvat year dates and correspond to Gregorian years 1896 to 1900. Why so few Poonch stamps of the fourth design survive which were used as fiscals is currently uncertain.

Most beginning collectors of Poonch will soon come across Poonch stamps canceled to order (CTO) **(Fig 35a)**. When this practice began in Poonch is uncertain. In 1889, the Poonch State Post Master wrote to a collector that, "used stamps are unprocurable here, but can send you unused ones"[6]. If the practice of sending collectors only mint stamps continued to the close of the State Post Office, it raises the strong possibility that, at least, some of the Poonch 4th issue stamps found CTO were obliterated after the close of the State Post Office.

Finally no history of the stamps of Poonch can be written without reference to philatelic deviousness and intrigue. Although the philatelic rectitude of Poonch has been praised by several different writers[5], little has been published about its less pleasant or sordid side. Father C. B. Simons, who was notorious

in the philatelic history of Jammu and Kashmir, may have played a barely known role in Poonch as well. Evans noted that, "There were remainders which were placed in the hands of reverend gentleman, whose name was well known in connection with remainders of Kashmir, but I can find no details at all either of the varieties that existed or the quantities. In fact, the only mention of them that I can find is in the 'The Ph. J.' of India for December 1898 and January 1899, in the former of which it was stated that some of these remainders had been "obliterated to order" before the obliterator was handed over to Capt. Godfrey; whilst in the latter it was announced that Captain Godfrey had "induced Rev. Father Simons to hand over to him for destruction all the 'postmarked to order' Poonch stamps which he had in stock. Many of these stamps thus defaced must have been sold before this even took place"[46].

My own attitude towards Poonch stamps printed with the original dies but on papers not known as used by the Poonch State Post Office prior to 1895 is one of caution. Some of these, as yet, unclassified stamps will eventually be shown to originate prior to 1895 and deserve catalog status; others will be shown to be forgeries. This leaves, at least, two other groupings: fiscals and 'philatelic shenanigans' that may contribute to the pool of stamps printed with the original implements but on papers that have not yet been identified as part of the Poonch State Post Office stock. How pervasive and prevalent was the philatelic rascality which occurred after the State Post Office closed? From the information available, judgment as to its extent is difficult, but there is a hint in Captain Godfrey's writing, "I forwarded an unofficial inquiry whether the Kashmir and Poonch Durbars would consider the defacement of the dies of their stamps, to prevent further printing and protect the interest of collectors who might have bought stamps of genuine postal issue[50].

Listed below from the literature of the ***Garratt-Adams Collection*** are Poonch stamps, whose status is uncertain, and are currently uncatalogued in the Stanley Gibbons catalog.

1/2 Anna on coarse buff or toned [wove] paper which was thicker than the usual toned wove batonne. These are dated August 1886-September 1888[5]. (See **Fig. 29a** for a possible example but used in 1893.)

1p. on green wove[46].
½ Anna on yellow laid batonne[9].
1 Anna on yellow green laid[5].
4 Anna on blue wove batonne[5]. (See **Fig. 34c** and **34d** for two other recently documented blue wove batonne stamps from this set.)
4 Anna on pale greenish laid paper[5].

Douie noted that the following three stamps probably issued in 1895 or later are either fiscals or possibly reprints[5].

1/4 Anna on buff laid paper (a reprint?).
1 Anna aniline rose on pale green laid paper.
4 Anna red on buff laid paper.

Stamp Production

4th Issue Printing Methods, spacing, tete beche stamps, gum, double prints

Printing Methods

Prior to printing, horizontal and vertical guidelines were often drawn on the paper to aid the printer in properly placing the impressions.

The 1p. was printed from a carved stone which has been described as either a 'bloodstone'[4] or from 'the quartz family'[35]. The stone die is joined to its handle with red sealing wax[35].

The ½, 1, 2, and 4 Anna were printed from brass dies.

The red color pigment used for printing was cinnabar (shingraf)[25].

O'Shea's description of the printing process is picturesque: "Each stamp is impressed singly by means of a brass die fixed into a handle like an ordinary post office seal. The operator sits cross legged on the floor, before him is a thin cloth pad, on the palm of the left hand is a dab of red color, a sheet of paper is laid on the pad and moistened with a damp cloth; the die is then taken in the right hand and impression after impression produced...."[13].

— Fig. 34d. The defaced 1p. die in the RPSL Museum. The die is carved out of green stone and attached to its handle with red sealing wax. Image courtesy of Dr. Geoffrey Eibl-Kaye FRPSL Ref.35.

Tete Beche and Semi Tete Beche Multiples

The 1876 6 pie pair one stamp sideways is very rare.

— Fig. 35. 1894 December 1p. pair red on lilac laid, variety one stamp sideways.

Pricing in the 2013 Stanley Gibbons British Commonwealth catalog suggests that 1p. tete-beche and semi tete-beche (one stamp sideways) pairs are moderately common on yellow wove batonne, yellow laid batonne, yellow laid, orange buff wove batonne, blue wove batonne, aniline rose on blue wove batonne; quite scarce on white laid batonne, gray blue laid, lilac laid **(Fig. 35)** and aniline rose on buff laid papers.

— Fig. 35a. 1p on Lilac laid paper. Row 10/1 stamp sideways. Row 10/2-4 stamps tete beche to adjacent rows. Ex Dawson.

The Stanley Gibbons catalog lists tete-beche pairs and semi tete-beche pairs for the ½ Anna on white laid, and the Official 1/2 Anna on wove, 1 Anna white laid batonne, 2 Anna on yellow wove batonne, 2 Anna on lavender wove batonne, 4 Anna on toned wove batonne, 4 Anna on white laid batonne, and 4 Anna aniline rose on yellow laid paper. The ½, 1, 2 and 4 Anna tete-beche and semi tete-beche stamps are either rare or very rare.

Douie, who was both an outstanding collector and also wrote with great knowledge about Poonch, opined, "As all the stamps of Poonch are hand stamped singly, it is natural that tete-beche and semi tete-beche pairs should occur. These varieties, to my mind, have no interest"[5].

— Fig.35b. 4a on yellow laid paper part of a block of 18 and showing one stamp sideways (position 2/3) SG 63/63a. Image courtesy of Mr. Dan Walker.

— Fig. 35c.The amazing 4 Anna block of 42 on yellow laid paper showing the left 3 columns (18 stamps) tete beche to the right 4 rows (24 stamps) resulting in 6 tete beche pairs . The back signed by Baldeo Singh. SG 63/63b. Image courtesy of Mr. Dan Walker.

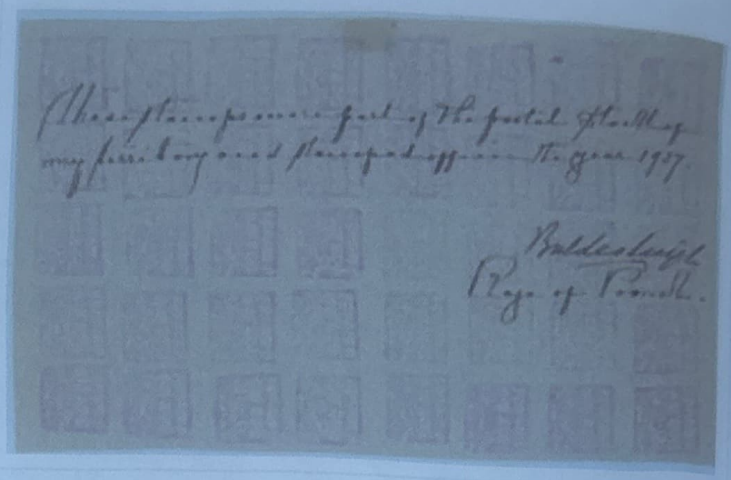
Recently tete-beche or semi tete beche pairs besides the 1p were sold at auction, some of which were probably not previously catalogued. The prices realized showed that some collectors find these of considerable interest.

The Poonch State postal authorities were usually quite stringent in their printing requirements and except for the 1p. tete-beche stamps, few printings errors are known. Double prints are rare. One has been reported on the 2 Anna on thin lavender wove batonne[21]. Occasionally other printing flaws are found **(Fig. 36)**.

A number of Poonch stamp sheets were signed on the back by Baldeo Singh, Raja of Poonch under his statement, "These stamps were part of the postal stock of my territory and stamped off in the year 1937" (1880) **(Fig. 36a)**. Several of these sheets are printed on papers which were not documented as used prior to the close of the Poonch Sate Post Office[5].

A number of stamps including some in the sheets signed by Raja Baldeo Singh were printed far apart. It is uncertain why.

– Fig. 36. 1p. on yellow laid batonne.



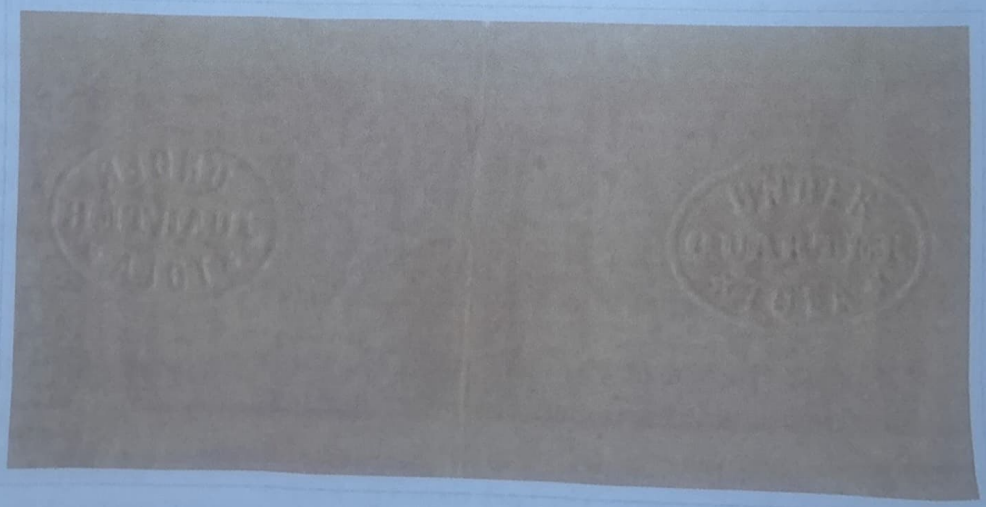
— Fig. 36a. Back of the 1 Anna Aniline Rose on green laid paper. "These stamps were part of the postal stock of my territory and stamped off in the year 1937" Buldeo Singh, Raja of Poonch.

Gum

'Gum' is sometimes found on stamps on toned wove batonne (SG 7-10) **(Fig. 17)** and has also been noted on the 2 Anna on lavender wove batonne, the 2 Anna on thin pale yellow wove batonne[21], the 4 Anna on yellow wove batonne[41] and some Officials.

Paper embossing of "Under Quarter Tola" is not uncommon on the 1p wove batonne papers. It has also been seen on the ½ Anna on yellow wove[9], the 1/2 Anna on toned white laid paper, white batonne paper (not recorded as white or laid)[9], and on the 2 Anna lavender batonne paper. A "Lion in Oval" embossing has been noted on the ½ Anna lavender wove batonne[21] and on the 1p. black on wove paper[14].

Batonne lines run horizontally and vertically although very rarely stamps were printed on papers in which the batonne lines run diagonally[9].

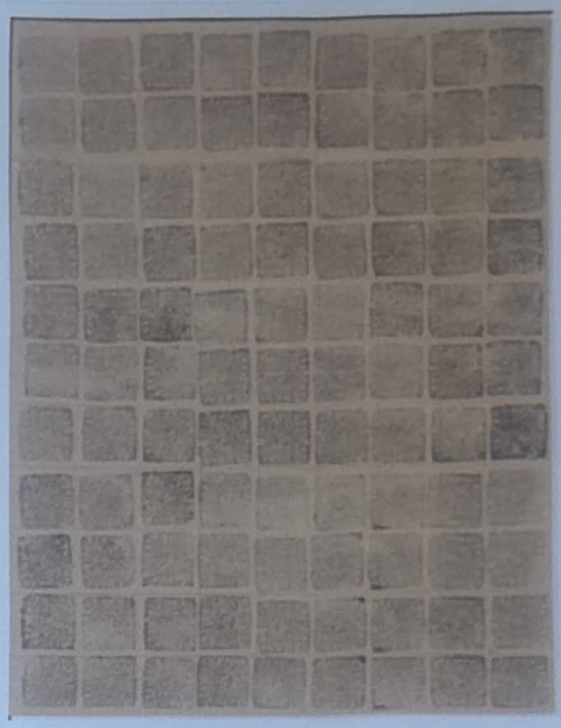


— Fig. 36b.Embossing 'UNDER QUARTER TOLA' on the front and back of the 1/2 Anna on laid batonne paper.

Number of Stamps on a Sheet

The answer to the question: "How many stamp impressions were printed on sheets of Poonch stamps?" is complex. Although it is tempting to state "As many as can fit", this answer is oversimplified.

The instructions which the postal authorities gave the artisans who printed the stamps of Poonch are unknown. Early writers have noted that the paper used for printing was purchased in the local marketplace, and the selection was limited. Some Poonch sheets have numbers on the reverse, or a written statement by Buldeo Singh with a S. 1937 year date **(Fig. 36a)**, but the date a specific sheet of Poonch stamps was actually printed is largely uncertain. It is quite possible that a number of the surviving sheets were printed after the close of the State Post Office in 1894 and prior to the destruction of the dies.



— Fig. 36c. 1p toned wove batonne paper (SG 06). 21.0 x 26.0 cm. 9 x 11=99 impressions with multiple pairs of one stamp sideways and tete-beche pairs. On the back are numbers in merchant script 1 0 [or 5] = 10 [or 15].

I have limited the discussion below largely to 'sheets with 4 margins' i.e., to sheets where the stamps are bordered by blank margins on four sides **(Fig 36c)**. Sheets in which the paper edge abuts a row of stamps have not been included in the database since it is possible that one or more columns or rows of stamps were trimmed from the original sheet.

The data comes from 18 sheets with 4 margins (1p. N=5, ½ Anna N=5, 1 Anna N=2, 2 Anna N=2 and 4 Anna N=4). The conclusions reached after examining this small sample are provisional.

Paper Size and Number of Impressions

The 18 examples were measured with the same ruler and measurements are likely accurate to +/- 1 mm. The 1p. measurements were: (shorter axis length x longer axis length, number of stamps in row x number of columns*) 20.9 x 25.9 cm. 9 x 11=99, 20.2 x 25.3 cm. 8 x 10=80, 20.3 x 27.0 cm. 9 x 12=108, 21.0 x 26.0 cm. 11 x 9=99, 21.0 x 26.8 cm. 9 x12=108;

the ½ Anna measurements were 20.6 x 27.1 cm. 9 x 12=108, 21.0 x 26.9 cm. 9 x12=108, 20.9 x 25.9 cm. 9 x 11=99, 20.9 x 27.2 cm. 8 x 11=88, 21.0 x 26.9 cm. 9 x 12=108;

1 Anna sheets measured 25.8 x 20.9 cm. 8 x 10=80, 20.9 x 26.9 cm. 9 x 12= 108;

the 2 Anna measurements were 20.8 x 27.4 cm. 8 x 11= 88, 20.8 x 26.0 cm. 8 x 10=80;

— Fig. 36d. 1p. on laid paper. The 4 vertical lines between stamps do not extend to the bottom edge of the paper. The 2nd horizontal line also does not extend to the lateral paper margin. These finding suggests that no stamps have been trimmed from the lower row or the column on the viewer's right.

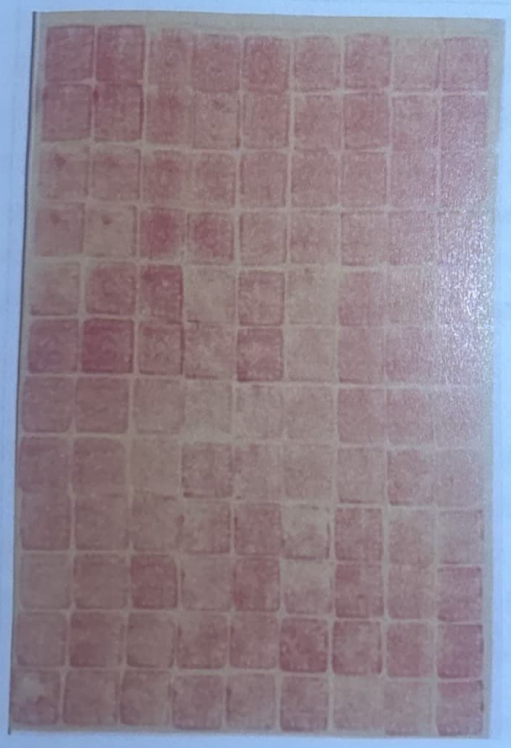
and the 4 Anna measured 21.0 x 25.9 cm. 6 x 8=48, 25.4 x 20.6 cm. 8 x 6=48 , 27.1 x 20.9 cm. 8 x 6=48 and 25.8 x 21.0 cm. 8 x 6=48.

The mean +/-1SD for the shorter length was 20.8 +/- 0.24 (N=18). The mean +/- 1SD of the longer length was 26.4 +/- 0.68 cm. The mean +/-1SD for the area of the sheets was 547 +/- 16.2 cm.^{2} (N=18).

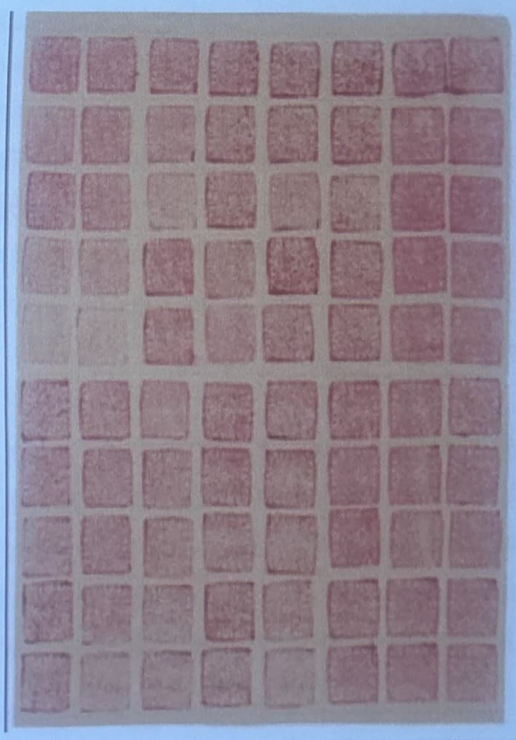
*The 1p. sheets usually contained either tete-beche pairs or pairs one stamp sideways or both. The 1p. data is presented without an attempt to determine whether the paper was oriented upright (short axis vertical) or sideways (short axis horizontal). In the case of the ½ -4 Anna sheets, if the first measurement in centimeters is larger than the second, the sheet was placed sideways for printing.

In this sample of 18 sheet, the 1p. sheets had 80, 99 or 108 impression. The ½ Anna sheets had either 88, 99 or 108 impressions; the 1 Anna sheets had 80 or 88 impression and the paper was oriented both upright and sideways; the 2 Anna sheets had either 80 or 88 impression and the 4 Anna had 48 impressions with the paper oriented either upright (N=1) or sideways (N=3).

— Fig. 36g. 1p on yellow laid paper showing two horizontal lines present between the upper and middle rows. The middle and right stamp pairs each show one stamp sideways (SG 36/ 36a). The stamps are widely spaced.



— Fig. 36h. 1p. on wove batonne paper with variety. 20.3 x 27.0 cm. 9 x 12= 108. The impressions are closely spaced.



— Fig. 36i. 1p. on laid paper with both tete beche and one stamp sideways pairs. 20.2 x 25.3 cm. 8 x10=80. The 1p. stamps are spaced relatively widely apart.

Pro Tempore Opinion

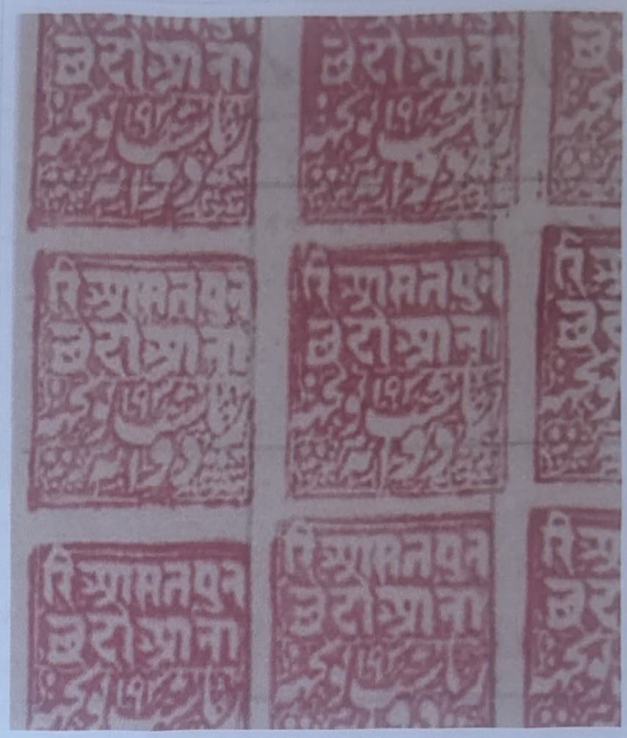
The 4 margin Poonch sheets (N=18) described above were relatively constant in paper size measuring 20.8 cm. +/-1SD 0.24 cm. along their shorter axis and 26.4 +/-0.68 cm. along their longer axis. This suggests that Poonch sheets measuring less than 20.3 cm. in shorter axis or 25.0 cm. or less in longer axis will not be statistically similar to the sample population described above and may be trimmed. It may be useful to examine the pencil lines often found between rows and columns of stamps which were used as printing guides. If at least one line does not extends beyond the peripheral margins of adjacent stamps, or, if the line does not extend to the paper edge, this suggests that no rows or columns have been cut off on that side **(Fig. 36d, Fig. 36e-f)**. If all the lines extend to the very periphery of the paper on one side, this does not necessarily imply that a row or column has been removed on that side, but it does raise the possibility.

Double lines are present between stamp rows on some sheets **(Fig. 36g)**. This finding may occur more than once on a sheet. The double lines may run both horizontally and vertically. The significance of this finding is unclear.

The number of stamp impressions found on 4 margin sheets in this small series of 18 varies. On the 1p. sheets, 80, 99 or 108 impressions occurred. On the ½ Anna sheets, 88, 99 or 108 impressions were present. The 1 Anna sheets had 80 and 108 impressions; The 2 Anna sheets had 80 or 88 stamps. [The Garratt-Adams collection had a 'sheet' of 56 very widely spaced 2 Anna stamps with a note "originally 9 rows of 7=63"[9]]. The 4 Anna sheets in this series had only 48 impressions **(Fig. 36l)**. The 1 p. and ½ Anna sheet impressions tended to be closely arranged **(Fig. 36h, Fig. 36j)**, although sheets of both values with more widely spaced stamps also occurred **(Fig. 36i)**. The evidence does not support the notion that the artisans who printed the stamps of Poonch consistently crammed as many impressions as could fit onto the paper **(Fig.36k)**. In this small series, the 4 Anna stamp impressions were printed wide apart with only 48 to a sheet (N=4) **(Fig. 36l)**.

The methods I use to identify Poonch sheets which, in my opinion, have not had columns or rows of stamps cut off, probably results in selecting intact sheets, but a trade off may be the lack of recognition of other smaller, yet, complete examples. I have not included values recorded in the literature for the total number of stamps in a sheet, but have only included those from the 18 sheets noted above; and this restriction may result in eliminating other legitimate configurations which I have not seen.

— Fig. 36e. 2 Anna Lavender wove batonne SG 52 8 x 10=80. There is little or no margin on the viewer's left. Has a column of stamps been trimmed from the sheet? Several of the left horizontal pencil lines do not extend to the paper edge (see Fig. 36f). The paper measures 20.8 x 26.0 cm. The value of 20.8 cm in conjunction with the pencil line findings suggest that no stamp impressions have been trimmed from the sheet's left margin.



— Fig. 36f. 2 Anna Lavender wove batonne SG 52. The horizontal lines do not extend to the paper edge suggesting that no stamp impressions were trimmed away from the left margin of the sheet. Back signed by Baldeo Singh.

The Inks and Water Solubility

"These Color Don't Run," from a song title by Van Zant.

Captain Godfrey stated that Poonch stamps were printed with water color inks. The Stanley Gibbons catalog 2013 also notes that the stamps of Poonch are "handstamped in water colours". Most Poonch collectors equate 'water color' with solubility in water. More than thirty years ago, the late Frits Staal and I immersed some 4th issue Poonch red stamps in water and found, to our surprise, that the *majority tested* did not elute. Our motivation at the time for testing was the premise [subsequently shown to be incorrect] that if the ink used in a Poonch red stamp were not water soluble, it was forged.

Fig. 36j. The 1/2 Anna on white laid. 9 x 12= 108. The impressions are quite closely packed.

Since then, I have very occasionally put a droplet of water on a Poonch stamp. My current technique for testing solubility is to place a water drop from a syringe on a corner of the printed design and wait 7-10 minutes; and then press down hard the tip of a cotton swab* (Q-tip) perpendicular to the design, *but not to rotate or drag the tip.* If visible color were present on the cotton, the ink was considered water soluble. Since a false negative swab test, would result in irreversible damage to the stamp, the predictive value of the swab test for determining the water solubility of Poonch inks was done. Damaged Poonch stamps were tested with the protocol above, and, *if no visible color were detected* on the swab, the stamp was immersed in water for 5+ minutes. In 8/9 cases of a negative swab test followed by immersion, the ink was colorfast. In one stamp slight elution occurred. These results indicate that even though the chance of a false negative swab test is infrequent, it can happen and may result in stamp damage.

Water solubility depends on several variable such as temperature, solvent volume, and other substances present in the water. I did not control for these except that the water temperature was usually 67-72° Fahrenheit (20-22°C) and only one water droplet was used from the syringe in the cotton swab test. If no color were present on the cotton swab and if no colorant (pigment) was seen in the water on those subsequently immersed, the ink was considered to be of limited solubility (LS) in water. If visible color was present on the swab or in the water, the ink was considered as soluble (S).

At least two different inks or colorants have been cataloged as used in Poonch: 1. According to Capt. Godfrey the pigment used for printing the 1876 6p (SG 1) was 'shingraf" [Cinnabar = mercuric sulfide-HgS-] which is nearly insoluble in water[25]. How the cinnabar was prepared for use as ink is not yet known; and, 2) aniline rose.

The printed design on many Poonch stamps are relatively sharp. O'Shea noted that prior to printing some Poonch stamps, "the paper was… moistened"[13]. Water soluble inks tend to absorb and diffuse on moistened paper—a finding which is only occasionally present in most Poonch red color stamps—n which the design is not visible from the back—and is some weak, indirect evidence that the majority of Poonch red stamps are not highly soluble in water.

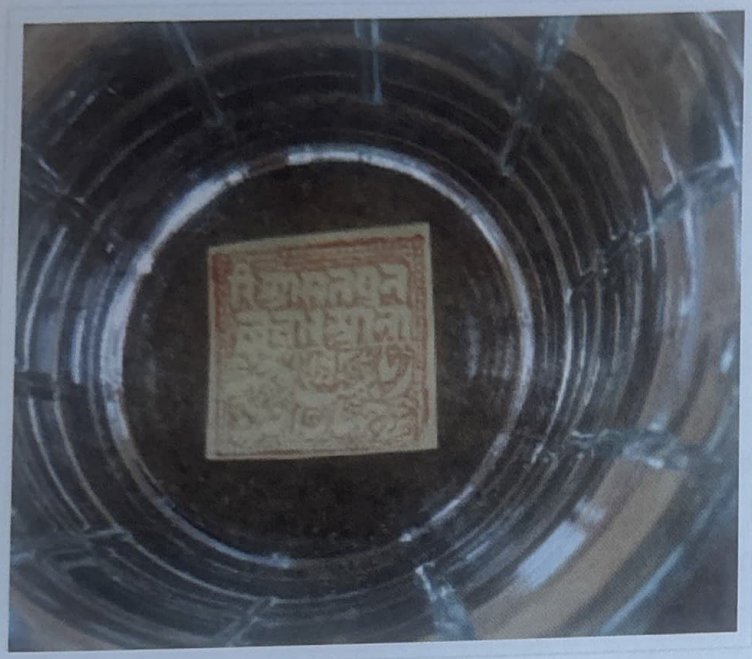
I have tested 5 used copies of the 1876 6p.red (SG 1). Four copies showed: LS and one: S. One copy of SG 1, which was LS, was then immersed in water and the stamp colorant and manuscript cancel remained LS.

I have also tested the 1/2 1880 (SG 3) used: LS, the 1/2 Anna on toned wove (SG 7): LS, the 1/2 Anna on toned wove batonne (SG 9): LS, the 1/2 Anna red on white laid batonne (SG 12): LS, the 1p. on yellow wove batonne (SG 27): LS, the 4 Anna yellow wove (SG31): LS **(Fig. 36m)**, the 1p. yellow laid (SG 41): LS, the 1 Anna green on wove batonne (SG 50): LS, the 1p. blue on wove batonne (SG 53): LS **(Fig. 36)**, the aniline rose 1p. on blue wove batonne (SG 57) (S); another showed LS, and the 1p. green laid (SG 60): S, the 1p. black on laid (SG 01): LS, the 1/2 Anna black on laid (SG 02): LS, the 2 Anna black on laid (SG 04) LS, the 1/2 Anna black on white laid (SG 07): LS. Another SG 07 showed S. *The finding that one SG 07 showed LS and one S indicates that the result of a swab test on one stamp may not predict the results of testing others of the same catalog number and that the result of testing one stamp may not predict the solubility behavior of other examples on the same paper.*

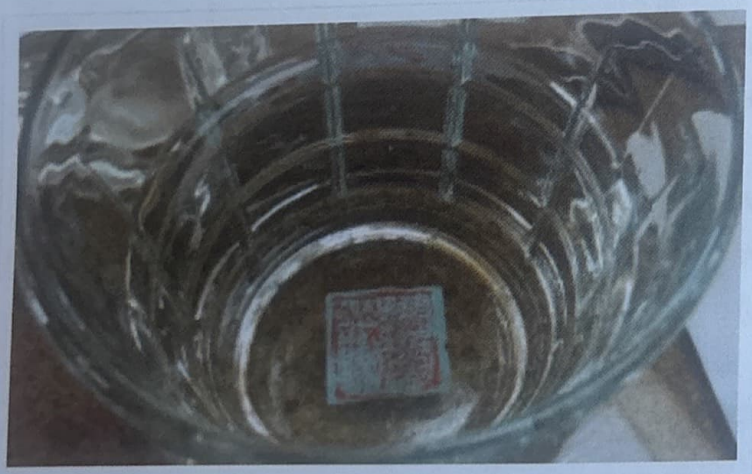
I found one stamp which had presumably been previously immersed in water; the remaining ink was still very water soluble **(Fig. 36o)** when tested with a cotton swab. The design is now so indistinct that I can not state with confidence that it is genuine.

— Fig. 36k. 1 Anna on green laid paper printed with aniline dye. The stamps are widely spaced. The paper measures 25.5 x 15 cm. 10 x 6= 60 Most likely a large block rather than a complete sheet. Two rows of 10 x 2= 20 have probably been trimmed off.

— Fig. 36l. The 4 Anna on yellow laid paper. 8 x 6= 48. The impressions are widely spaced. The long axis of the paper is horizontal (sideways) rather than vertical (upright).



— Fig. 36m. The 4 Anna on yellow wove paper. The stamp has been immersed in water for 5+ minutes and the ink shows no visible water solubility.



— Fig. 36n. The 1p on blue wove batonne paper. The stamp has been immersed in water for 5+ minutes, and the ink shows no visible sign of water solubility.

In another Poonch stamp, the 1p. on buff laid (probably SG58), the paper absorbed the water droplet much faster than usual and left a black discoloration at the margin of the absorbed water **(Fig. 36p)**.

I do not advocate putting even a droplet of water on any Poonch stamp except for *research* purposes.

Conclusions 1) the *majority* of red Poonch stamps tested in which the design *was not visible from the* back showed LS. It is known that some aniline colored stamps from other countries produced without 'fixing agents' are water soluble.

With the very limited data so far collected, one can provisionally conclude 1) that the *majority* of Poonch red colored stamps in which the design is not visible from the back are LS, and 2) that immersion in water is *not* a useful test for identyfying such red stamps from those forgeries produced with 'printers' ink or other non-water soluble inks.

* The suggestion for using a Q-tip came from Phil Lunn.

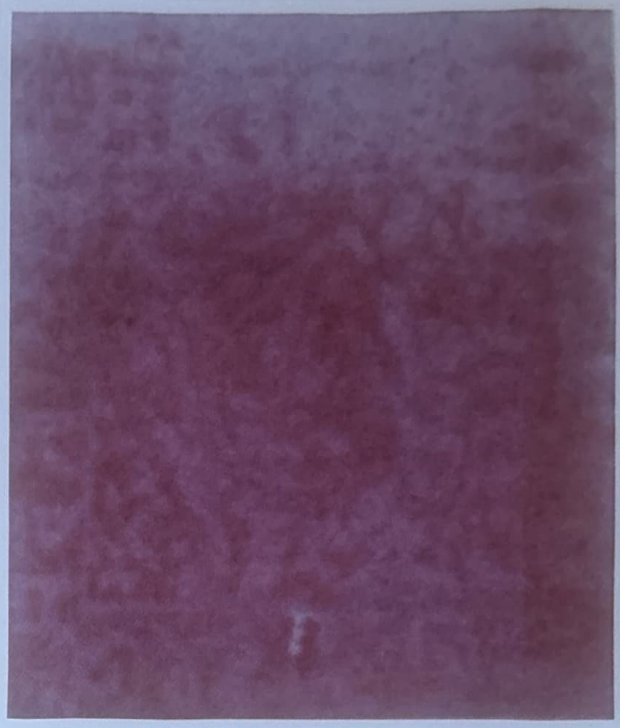
The 'Aniline Rose' Stamps of Poonch

"Today, if you are not confused, you are just not thinking clearly." quote by 'U. Peter'.

The Stanley Gibbons British Commonwealth catalog gives two color choices for non-Official Poonch stamps: red or 'aniline rose'. Accurately identifying whether a Poonch stamps is printed with an aniline dye or non-aniline pigment is currently difficult. The problem is hopefully illustrated below and is multifactorial.

Three properties have been used to identify Poonch aniline dye stamps 1) 'rose' color rather than 'red' and/or 2) the printed design on the front of the stamp is also visible on the back; i.e., the dye has saturated the paper and is visible on the reverse and/or 3) the design fluoresces an orange hue under ultraviolet light.

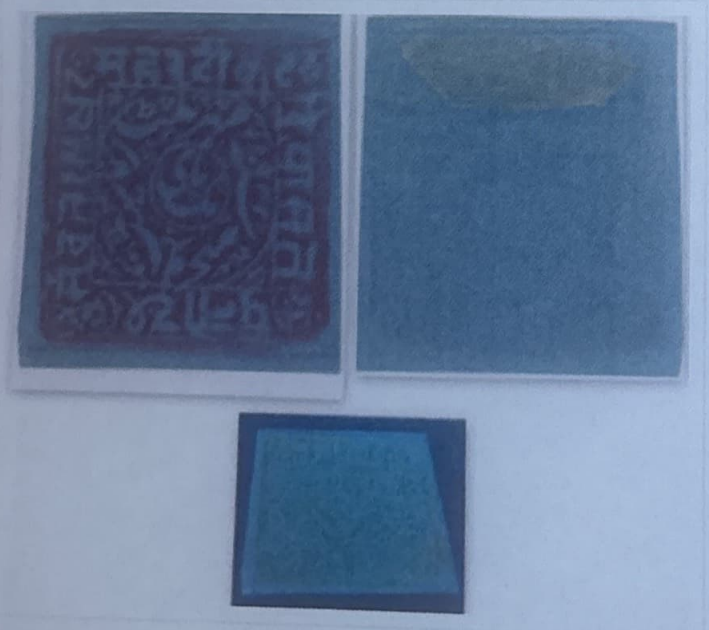
The Stanley Gibbons Stamp Color Key (copyright 2001) does not display a color for 'aniline rose' although it does illustrate 'rose'. The definition 'rose color' varies and has included 'purplish red, pinkish red or light crimson'. The vagueness of the definition may leave the collector of Poonch wondering just where the SG 'red' color spectrum ends and the 'aniline rose' spectrum begins. In addition, the hue of adjacent stamps in sheets or strips which contain 'rose' color stamps may appear visually quite different **(Fig. 36q)**.



— Fig.36o. A 1p. stamp on gray-blue laid stiff paper. The ink is not colorfast. Presumably the stamp had previously been immersed in water.

— Fig 36p. Discoloration (green arrows) caused by a water drop on a 1p. stamp on buff laid paper.

— Fig 36q. Four 1 Anna on green wove paper cropped from a block of 40. The stamps on the viewer's left are more 'rose' in hue; those on the right are more red. The block of 40 stamps is signed in back by Buldeo Singh.



— Fig. 36r. A 1p. 'rose' on blue wove batonne paper. The design is not visible in back. Bottom image: The stamp fluoresces an orange hue under long wave UV light.

Fig. 36q shows a block of four Poonch 1 Anna stamps. The stamps on the left being more 'rose' than the stamp adjacent which appears considerably redder. So: 1) are these all non-aniline dye Poonch stamps, some of which appear 'rose' while others are 'red' color or 2) are the 'rose' stamps in the left column printed with aniline dye and the stamps on the right printed with non-aniline pigment (aniline dye and non-aniline dye stamps printed se-tenant) or 3) are these all different hues of Poonch aniline dye stamps some of which appear 'rose' and others which are 'red'? (See **Fig. 36u** for an opinion).

Fig. 36r shows a stamp whose color most Poonch collectors, would classify as 'rose' rather than 'red' on blue paper. Yet, no design is visible in back and this finding is typical of the 1p. 'rose' colored stamps on blue wove batonne paper, suggesting that sole use of this parameter will not completely differentiate every Poonch aniline stamps from those printed with non-aniline colorants.

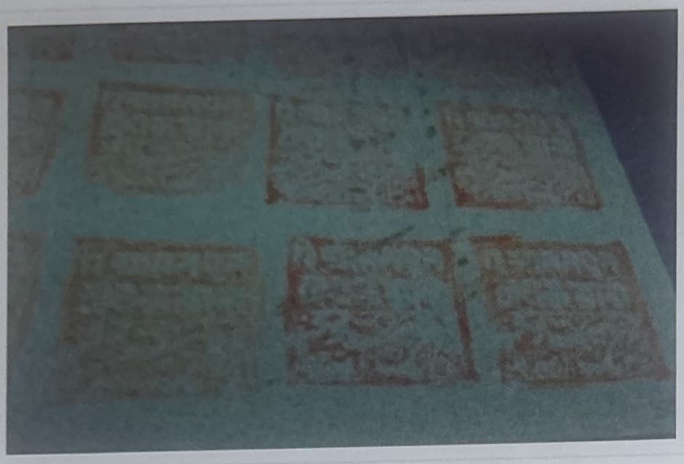
It has been known for years that some aniline dye stamps fluoresce when exposed to UV light. Dan Walker has emphasized to me that Poonch aniline rose stamps do so[47]. I had previously shined both short wave UV light (2500+ Angstroms) and long wave (a spectrum from about 3000-4000 Angstroms) on Poonch rose colored stamps in a *lighted* room and failed to find fluorescence. After receiving the information from Dan that 'aniline rose' glows orange' I tried again using long wave ultraviolet light, this time in a dark room, and can *state* that some Poonch stamps which appear 'rose'

in color and in which the design is visible on the back *do* indeed *glow orange under UV light*. It may be that, as Dan Walker attests, only those Poonch stamps that fluoresce orange under UV light are printed with aniline dyes. Further investigation will be required before the accuracy limits of fluorescence for separating genuine Poonch stamps printed with aniline dyes from those printed with pigments is determined. The presence of orange fluorescence is *not* sufficient to assure that a Poonch stamp is *genuine and printed with aniline dye*. Some forgeries fluoresce[41]. A separate group of 'rose' colored stamps exist some of which appear 'rose' and some 'orange' under UV light **(Fig. 36s, Fig. 36t)**. Their status is currently quite uncertain.

The chemical composition of the aniline rose dye used in Poonch has not been published. It has been suggested that the color 'aniline rose' is a complex nitrogenous compound (C20H21N30) obtained by oxidizing aniline and toluidine[48]. Godfrey published that the red pigment in Poonch stamps contains mercury[25]. It is probable that chemical analysis can determine a property that will reliably differentiate the Poonch aniline dyes from those printed with non-aniline containing pigments and once established, then the visual properties including the prevalence of florescence of 'aniline rose' versus the red pigment stamps of Poonch can be better defined. For the time being and until further information becomes available, the collector is probably safest in assuming a Poonch stamp is printed with aniline rose dyes if, it is 'rose' in color, the design is visible on the reverse

— Fig. 36s. Group of 5 stamps- The stamp in row 1/1 is on green laid paper. The stamps in row 1/3 and 2/2 are printed on ribbed paper. Row 1/2 is on green laid paper. The stamp in row 2/1 is on laid paper.

— Fig. 36t. The same five stamps as in Fig. 36q but exposed to UV light. The stamp in row 1/1 does not fluoresce and is probably printed with non-aniline pigment. The stamps in row 1/3 and 2/3 appear pink under long wave UV light. The stamps in row 1/2 and 2/2 fluoresce bright orange. The status of these four stamps is not yet determined.



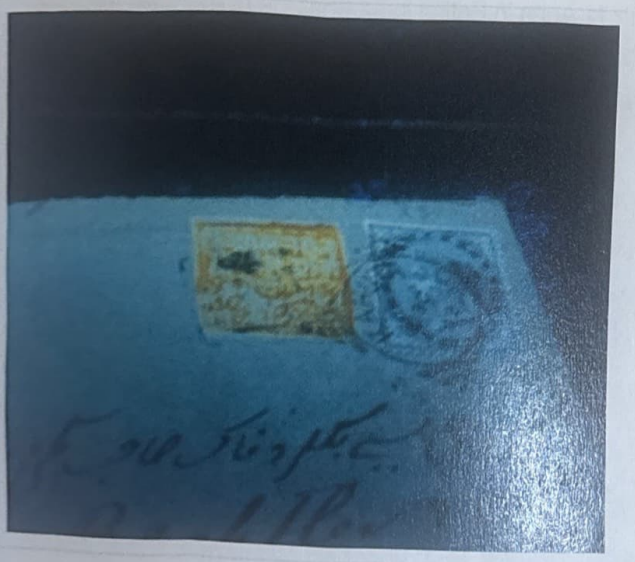
— Fig.36u. The same stamps as in Fig. 36q on the viewer's left and center with an additional row on the right now under long wave UV light. The rose and red stamps in Fig. 36q all fluoresce orange hues suggesting that they are all printed with aniline dye.

and it fluoresces an orange hue. If a stamp posses fewer than these three properties, its chances of being printed with an aniline dye may be more problematical. **Fig. 36u** shows that the block of four stamps in **Fig. 36q** do fluoresce orange hues under long wave UV light. The design is clearly seen on the reverse. This suggests, but is not conclusive, that all four stamps shown in **Fig. 36q** are printed with aniline dyes; and both aniline dye 'rose' and aniline dye printed 'reds' may be found se-tenant. What causes adjacent stamps to differ so markedly in hue is, as yet, not known.

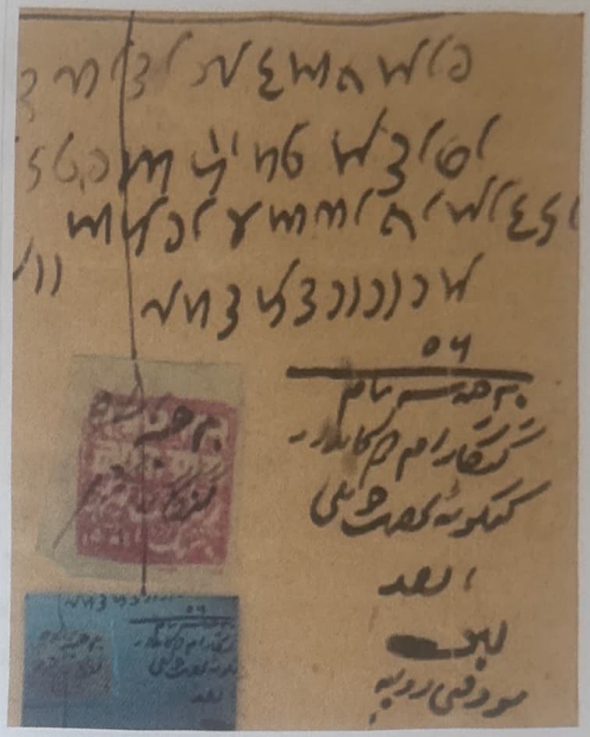
When were 'aniline rose' stamps used? Douie published that his collection contained 1p. and 1/2 Anna 'rose stamps printed in aniline colours' which were postally used in 1887-1888 with an occasional 1/2 Anna mailing into the 1890s[5]. **Fig. 36v** shows a late mailing of a rose colored 1/2 Anna on a philatelic cover from 1892. The stamp fluoresces orange **(Fig. 36w)**. Aniline rose stamps were also *fiscally* used *after* the Poonch State Post Office closed (see 'Uncatalogued Stamps' in the 'Stamps' section). **Fig. 36x** shows a 1 Anna aniline rose on *coarse*, green paper on a document dated in Indo Persian June 1,1899 ('56/ Jeth 20 in the Samvat calender). This date is more than four year *after* the State Post Office closed and about one year after the 1 Anna die was handed to Captain Godfrey for safe keeping[5,25]. When the stamp itself was printed is uncertain, but the late date of use and other published evidence indicates that it may have been ***produced well after*** the Poonch State Post Office closed.

My thanks to Dan Walker for his generous assistance in writing this section.

— Fig.36v. 1892 The 1/2 Anna Aniline rose on a philatelic cover addressed to Messr. Bechtler &; Co, Allahabad and dated October 1892.



— Fig.36w. The 1/2 Anna Aniline Rose on a different 1892 philatelic cover with long wave UV light.



— Fig. 36x. 1899 The 1 Anna aniline rose on coarse green paper dated in Indo-Persian in the Samvat calender 56/Jeth 20= June 1, 1899. Mr. Sunil Kumar who translated the text noted that "It is a receipt for money received on interest from a moneylender.
It has been executed by one Gangaram Kamdar. The place of execution is Kankote, Haveli, Poonch. (Note– Haveli is sometimes spelt as Haweli) Ref:.49. The insert image shows the 1 Anna under UV light. It fluoresces an orange hue. Document image courtesy of John Schneider.

Post Office Markings

Obliterators, Seals and Cachets Used on Poonch Mail

Pre-Adhesive Obliterator

1871 Colonel Martin recorded a duplex with a '290' numeral obliterator for 'Kahoota (Poonch State-Rawulpindee)' which had been officially listed in 1871[15].

British India (BI) Post Office (at Kahuta)

A. L-6/7 in use from 1877- 1889. From September 1877 to March 1884, the L-6/7 was used to obliterate both British India stamps and British India prepaid postal stationery. After March 1884, it was used only to obliterate British India stamps both on registered and ordinary mail but was not used to obliterate prepaid British India QV postal stationery. After 1884 it was used sporadically on overseas mail until late in 1889[6] as exemplified by a registered cover with 11 Anna in British India postage obliterated with the L6/7 and a Poonch 4 Anna sent March 5, 1889[22]. The L-6/7 marker is occasionally found 'tieing' early Poonch stamps in the era when the First Poonch seal was used as a transit marker **(Fig. 50)**.

B. Circle (2 lines. No year date) Sept 1877 (prior to issuance of Poonch stamps[6]) — March 1884. 'Kahuta' is present in the first line. On the second line is the month and the day but no year date. Used as a transit marker **(Fig. 38)**. The Kahuta 2 line circle was also used to occasionally 'tie' or cancel the Poonch 1876 6p. (SG 1) **(Fig. 50)** and also the rare 1879 ½ Anna (SG2) **(Fig 7b)**. This may have been a stage between the use of hand written notations for canceling stamps and the use of the First Poonch seal for obliteration.

The practice of the British India Post Office canceling or obliterating Poonch Stamps was somewhat rare. This procedure was nearly always done by the State Post Office.

— Fig. 37. L-6/7 Obliterator. BIA.

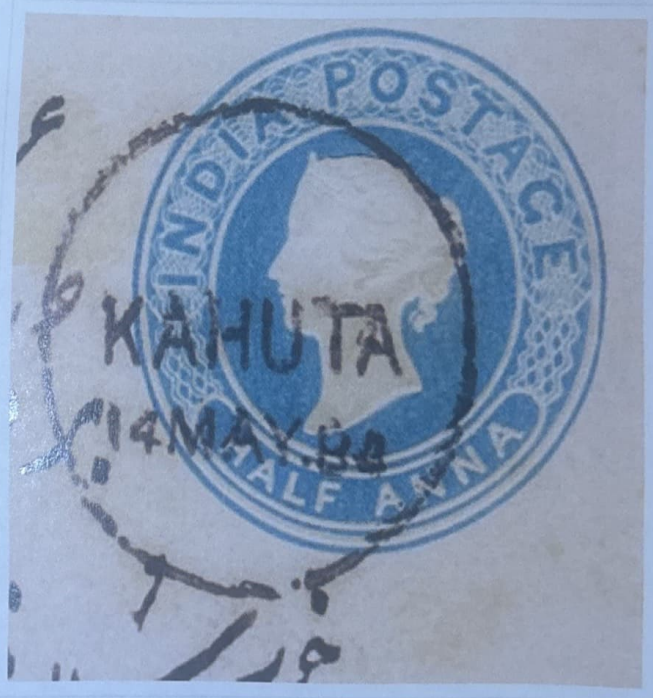
— Fig. 38. 'Kahuta' Circle (2 line. No year date). BIB.

C. Circle (2 lines with month, day and year date on second line). As type B, but with year date on second line **(Fig. 39a, 39b, 39c)**. It is seen canceling British India embossed QV postal stationery and British India post cards from 1884-1892; April 1887–November 1893 it was also used as a transit marker on mail lacking British India Postage **(Fig. 40)**; and is also found as an arrival marker associated with the Poonch Second Seal on mail from Jammu and Kashmir to Poonch from August 1885-November 1890 **(Fig. 53a, 60d)**.

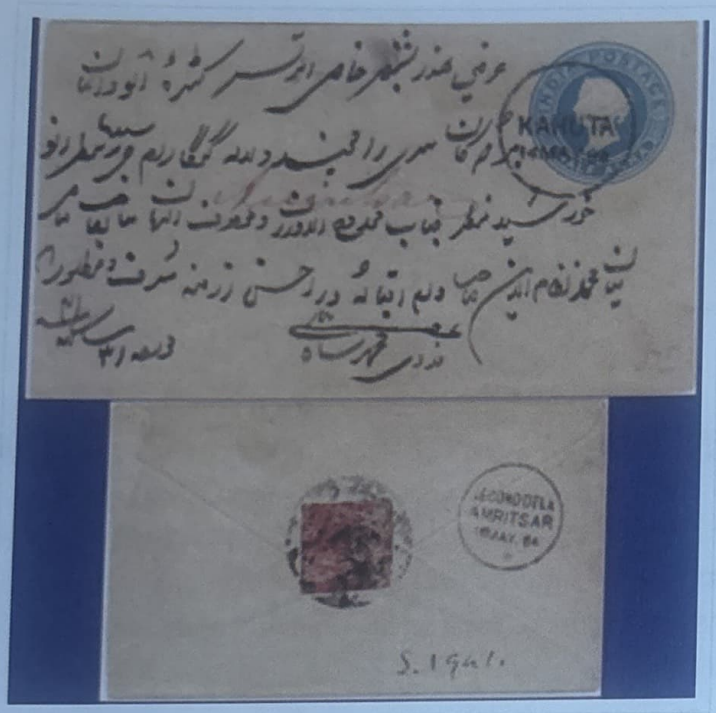
C1. The year date substitution variant '98' for '88' in the second line of the BI Kahuta CDS. **(Fig. 40a)**. Present November 1888. Also seen on a 1p. Post Card from the same month and year.

C2. Spelling variation "Kamuta" **(Fig. 41)**. Date uncertain. May 1894? At first, I thought this variation resulted from grime but the same variation is present in Registration Type 2a.

— Fig. 39. 1892 July 'Kahuta' 2 line with month, day and year date on second line. Late use. BIC.



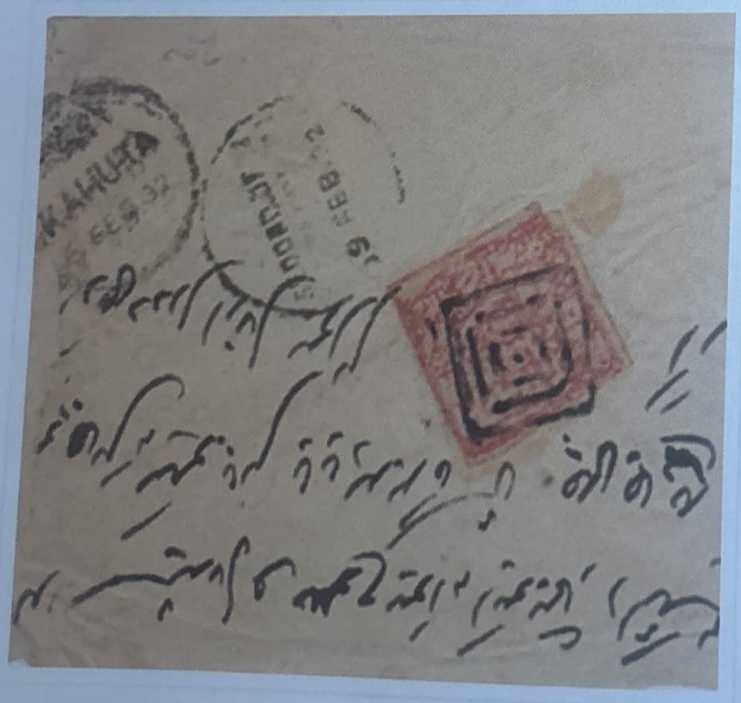
— Fig. 39a. Early use in May 1884 of the BI 'Kahuta' 2 line with month, day and year date on second line. BIC.



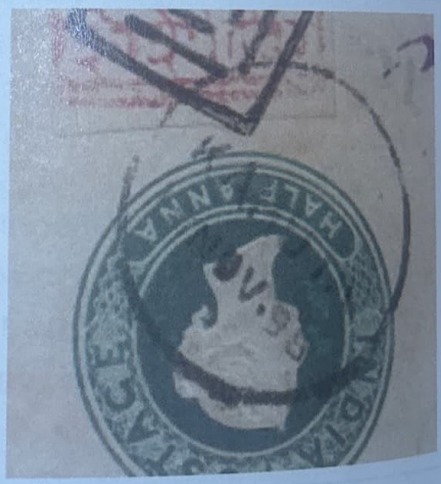
— Fig. 39b . Early use in May 1884 of the BI 'Kahuta' 2 line with month, day and year date on second line. BIC.

C3. 'Kahula' in 26mm diameter circle with cross at bottom and the date is in two horizontal lines in the center. Douie reported it and believed it was only used on registered letters[5]. I have not seen it.

D. Circle in barred square April 1891-94 with Kahuta in arc and date in two horizontal lines. It was introduced by April or May 1891 for canceling the QV printed on postal stationery **(Fig. 42)** and British India stamps **(Fig. 43)**. It is also recorded in green[6].



— Fig. 40. 1892 Feb. 'Kahuta' circle (2 line with day, month and year). The cover has no British postage and the 'Kahuta' 2 line circle is used as a transit marker



— Fig. 40a. Nov. 1888. The year date substitution varient '98' for '88' in the second line of the BI Kahuta CDS. The '9' and '8' type fonts in '98' are different making it unlikely that the '9' is simply the result of broken type. C1.

— Fig. 41. 1894 'Spelling variation 'Kamuta' for 'Kahuta'. 2 line circle with day, month and year'. Hand dated in Persian S.'47' or 1894. C2.

D1. No recognizable numerals of the year date are present in the third line. A character somewhat resembling a 'tilde' is sometimes present **(Fig. 43a, 43b)**. Seen in April-October 1893.

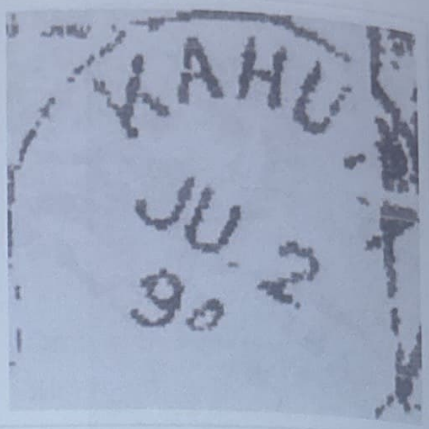
D2 Circle (3 line) with 'Kahuta' in arc at top, month and day on second line and year on bottom line. Recorded used in May 1894 as a CDS **(Fig. 44)** and, in the same month, as a transit marker; and also in June 1894 on a Value Payable Postage cover[6].

— Fig. 42. 1891 May 'Kahuta' circle in square. BID.

— Fig. 43. 1891 November 'Kahuta' circle in square canceling British India stamps. BID.

— Fig. 43a. The BI Circle in Square obliterator with no recognizable year date in third line. A character resembling a 'tilde' is present. On a Poonch 1 Anna service cover to Jammu date 'Se 1893'. BID1

— Fig. 43b. The BI Circle in Square obliterator with no recognizable year date in third line. Used on a 1/2 Anna Poonch cover to Rawilpindi in April 1893. BID1.



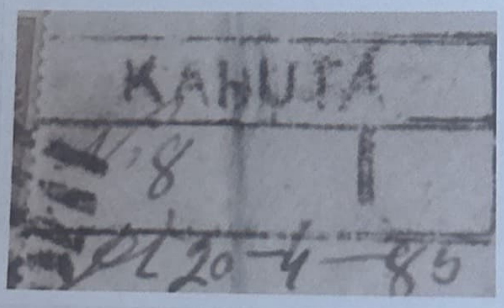
— Fig. 44. 'Kahuta' in Arc. Reproduced from Christie's Robson Lowe 21 September 1993, Lot 873. D2.

Registration Markers

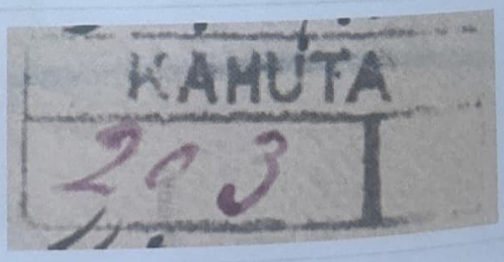
1. Rectangular two line box with top line 'KAHUTA' and bottom line blank except for a vertical line between the 'T' and 'A' of Kahuta. Seen in June 1886 and 1887.

2. Rectangular two line box with top line 'KAHUTA' and bottom line blank except for a vertical line below the 'A ' of 'KAHUTA'. From 1885-1894 **(Fig. 45)**.

2a. Variation "Kamuta' June 1894 **(Fig. 46)**.



— Fig. 45. 1885 April Registered cover with vertical line below 'A" in 'KAHUTA'. BIR2.



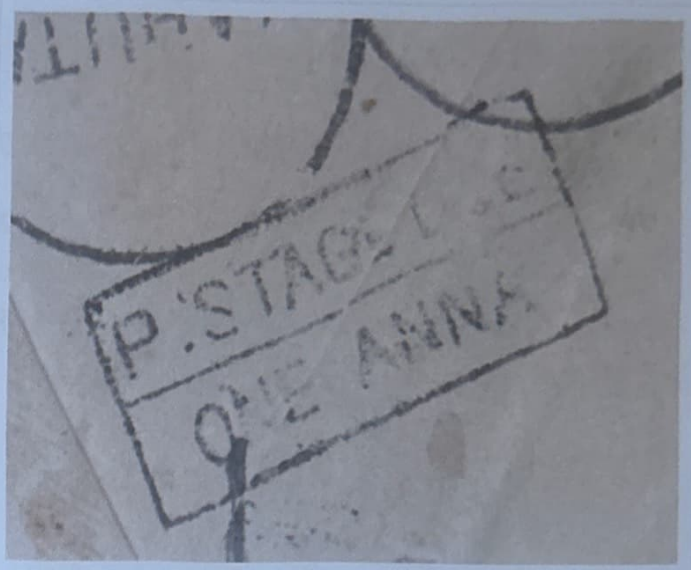
— Fig. 46. 1894 Registered cover with spelling variation 'Kamuta' instead of 'Kahuta'. BIR2a.

— Fig. 47. 1884 April 6p. tied by First Poonch Seal on piece. "POSTAGE DUE/ (blank)" . Much of the lower blank box has been trimmed. Ex Haverbeck. Formerly in author's collection. BIPD1.

Postage Due

1. Rectangular two line box with 'POSTAGE DUE' in the top line and a blank bottom line. In use until 1884[6] **(Fig. 47)**.

2. Rectangular two line box with 'POSTAGE DUE' in the top line and 'ONE ANNA' in bottom line. In use from 1884-1894 **(Fig. 48)**. The 'O' in 'POSTAGE' has been replace by a colon [:].



— Fig. 48. 1887 July "POSTAGE DUE/ONE ANNA". BIPD2.

— Fig. 49. 1891 "TOO LATE" cachet. BITL1.

Too Late

1. Rectangular box "Too Late". 1890[34]-1891 to Rawalpindi. **(Fig 49)**.

Poonch State Post Office

The First Poonch Seal dated 1933 (also called the 'Punch' Seal[6]).

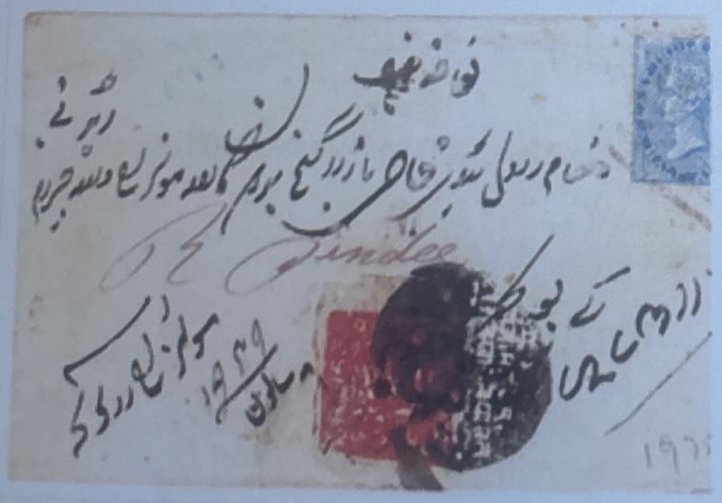
The First Poonch seal was originally used on pre-stamp covers; subsequently it was struck on covers as a transit mark until at least Feb 25, 1879[9] **(Fig. 50)** and then finally by June 20, 1879 or earlier it was used to obliterate Poonch postage stamps[6] **(Fig. 51)**. The First Poonch seal was used until at least late August 1887[9] **(Fig. 52)**.

— Fig. 50. First Poonch Seal used as a transit mark. 1876 6p. is hand canceled. The BI L-6/7 obliterator, BI Kahuta Circle and an Amritsar Delivery CDS tie the stamp to the cover back.

Rahat Ju, the Kashmir Die cutter, engraved the First Poonch seal[4].

On some strikes of the First Poonch seal, the fourth line may be difficult to visualize either because the ink is more watery or the inking is heavy.

A 1892 ¼ Anna post card is known in which the QV is canceled by the Kahuta circle in square and the Poonch stamp is obliterated by a large Poonch seal and the 3 square obliterator[9].



— Fig. 51. 1882 July 21 (Sawan 8, 1939) 1876 6 p. tied with the First Poonch Seal. The British India 1/2 Anna is obliterated with the British India L-6/7.

The Second Poonch Seal dated Samvat 1939 (1882-83)
(also called the 'Kahuta' Seal[6]).

Mr. H. Garratt-Adams originated the term 'Kahuta Seal' for the Second Poonch Seal. Mr. A. Bard called the First Poonch Seal the 'Punch seal'[6] and following the notation proposed by Garratt-Adams, Mr. Bard called the Second Poonch Seal the "Kahuta Seal"[6]. Dr. F. Staal has questioned the accuracy of the locational attribution of use to Kahuta[16]. I prefer to avoid this controversy by calling the seals: First and Second Poonch Seals which denotes their chronological appearance.

The First Poonch seal has the top four lines in Nagari; the Second Poonch seal has only the top 3 lines in Nagari. The top 4 lines of the First Poonch seal read "By the grace of holy Raghunath! Seal of the Poonch Post Office 1876-77"[6] **(Fig. 53)**.

The top 3 lines of the Second Seal read in translation: "By the grace of holy Raghunath! (Raghunathji) Seal of the Poonch Post Office 1882-83[5,16]. The remainder is in Indo-Persian and the translation is similar[5]. Raghunath is a deity at the chief Temple in Jammu and is also the deity named on the first Poonch seal[16].

Only a few examples of the Second Poonch seal have been recorded. It was not used as an obliterator but is found impressed as a transit marker[6] **(Fig. 53a)**. With one exception, the Second Seal is only recorded used as a receipt mark on mail incoming to Poonch[6].

— Fig. 52. 1887 July 1/2 Anna red. Missing British India postage which resulted in 1 Anna postage due. Late use of the First Poonch Seal. The Seal was last recorded used in August 1887. (Ref.9).The Kahuta circle was applied as a transit marker if British India postage was missing.

— Fig. 53. The Second Poonch Seal.

— Fig.53a. The Second Poonch Seal used on incoming mail as a receipt mark. The half Anna J&K New Rectangular was obliterated with the 10-bar obliterator of Jammu and another State postal seal was added to the cover which may be the later Jammu Circle in Dogri. The envelope then was transferred to the British India Post Office where the green half Anna QV was canceled by the BI small 'Sialkot' CDS dated 1890. After the stationery arrived at the BI P.O at Kahuta, the 'Kahuta' two line CDS was added presumably as an arrival marker. The envelope was then transferred to the Poonch State P.O., and the Second Seal was applied. The rules governing the use of the Second Seal are not entirely clear as yet. It may simply have acted as a Poonch State P.O. receipt mark, although it may also possibly have indicated that no further payment was due. Image courtesy of Dan Walker.

The exception is a registered postal stationery envelope originating in Poonch and sent to Bombay in 1889 with the Second Seal applied to the front as a dispatch mark[6] **(Fig. 53b)**. This cover probably represents a philatelic usage.

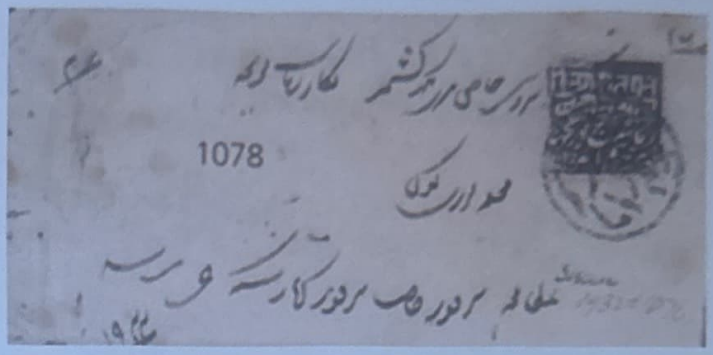
Period of reported Use: August 1885 **(Fig 60d)** to November 1890[6].

After the example from August 1885, the next recorded use of the Second Poonch Seal is on a cover from Srinagar with a Jammu and Kashmir 1/2 Anna New Rectangular. It arrived on May 30, 1886 and received a Kahuta British India circular date stamp and the Second Poonch seal[6].

— Fig. 53b. The Second Poonch State Seal used as a dispatch mark on the front of a registered stationery envelope from Kahuta to Bombay and mailed Dec. 1889.

Dak Sarvis (Poonch Service Post) Poonch Obliterator

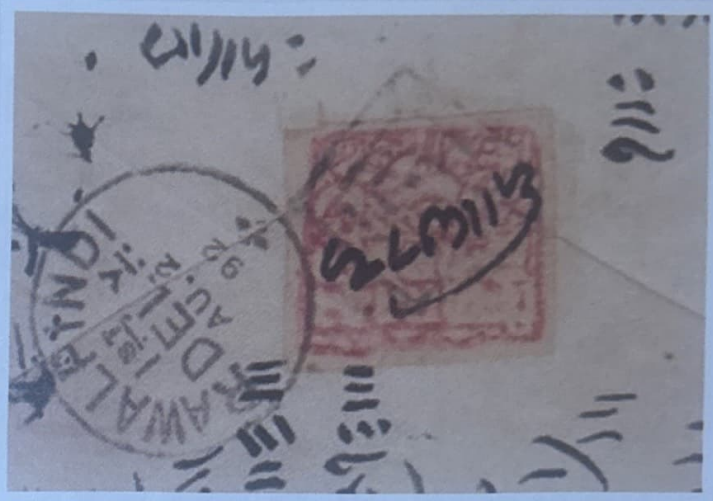
This is very rare and has been reported on one cover[17] and several stamps. It is unclear if these 'several' stamps were service stamps[6] or ordinary stamps[18]. The Dak Sarvis cover was addressed to Srinagar, pre-paid with a 1/2 Anna Poonch Service stamp and dated 3 Assu S. 1944 (Sept. 18 1887). The cover is endorsed with the J&K 10 bar strike and the Srinagar State Post Office date stamp[6,29] **(Fig. 54)**.



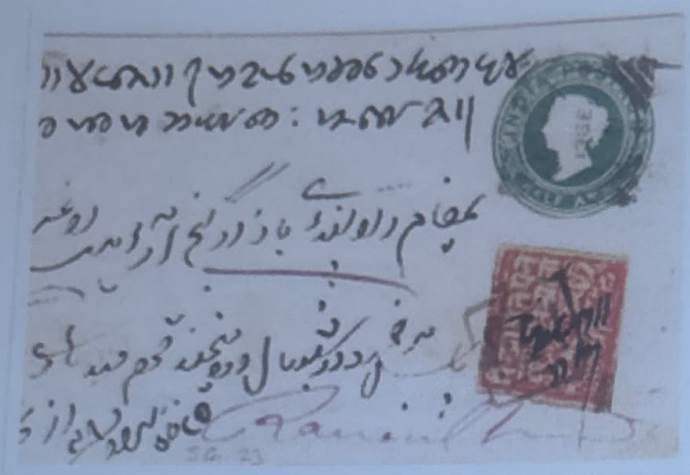
— Fig. 54. The Dak Sarvis obliterator reproduced from the Spink Auction, October 16, 2003, Lot 1078.

Three Box Square

Three diminishing squares surrounding a dot. In use from September 1887[9] to the close of the State Post Office and used to obliterate all Poonch stamps during those years. The First Poonch seal was used as an obliterator until at least late August 1887[9] **(Fig. 55)**. The three box square is usually found in black, although it has also been reported in dark blue ink[40]. State Post Office personal were mostly careful in applying the three square State obliterator so that it did not touch British India postage. It was used on Poonch stamps on covers sent both via Kahuta and via the Uri route suggesting that it was applied in Poonch town[16].



— Fig. 54a The 1/2 Anna Poonch stamp is obliterated with a handwritten notation in Merchant Script. Sent to Rawilpindi Aug. 1892.



— Fig. 54b. Poonch 1/2 Anna obliterated by a Merchant script notation. To Rawalpindi with 13 SE 1891 CDS.

— Fig. 54c. Merchant script similar to those on Poonch stamps on a J&K cover. The Kashmir date stamp with a colon but without a period after 'Kashmir' and no year date, is found from about 1880 to early 1884.

— Fig. 55. The three square. In use from ~Sept 1887 to the close of the State Post Office. It was the only postal obliterator used on Poonch stamps in this period.

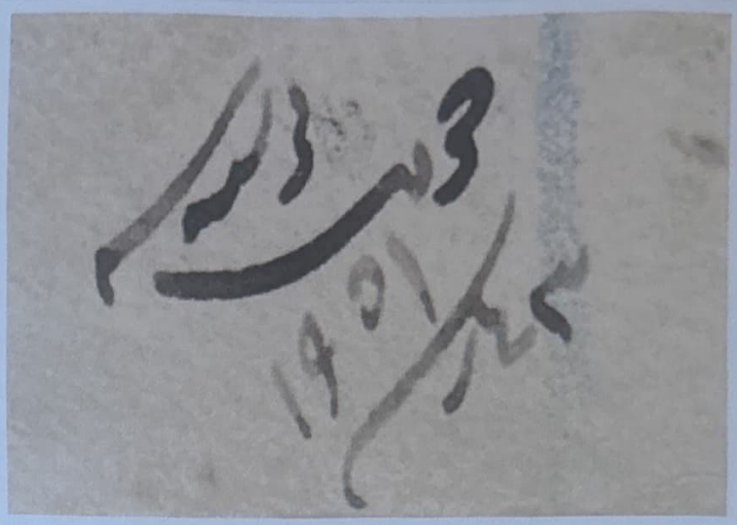
Handwritten Notations in Merchant Script

Various hand written Merchant script notations are sometimes found on Poonch covers obliterating the Poonch stamp. These are found on early covers with the 1876 6p. **(Fig. 1, Fig. 50)**, 1877 ½ Anna (SG 1a) **(Fig. 6b)** and 1879 ½ Anna **(Fig. 7)** but also on stamps of the 4th issue. One Merchant script notation, which is rather constant in appearance, is found on some later covers **(Fig. 27, 28, 54a, 54b)**. I have found it both on covers obliterated with the 3 box square and the occasional Poonch stamp on cover which lacked the 3 box square or other obliterator.

Mrs. Carol von der Lin, the noted Jammu and Kashmir expert, to whom I sent images of several of these notated covers has provisionally translated the notation to read "tikat laga-hu'a" with its English equivalent "stamped". This notation is not particularly scarce. The date range so far encountered is 1891-Nov 1894. The Garrat-Adams collection may have had an example from July 1890[9]. This Merchant script notation is also found occasionally on Jammu and Kashmir new Rectangular covers and was in use by at least early1884 **(Fig. 54c)**. A number of other handwritten notations obliterating Poonch stamps on cover are also known.

Handwritten Notations in Indo-Persian: jawâb navishta shuda

The handwritten notation 'jawâb navishta shuda' **(Fig. 56d, 62)** is rare on Poonch covers. Wheeler Thackston—Emeritus Professor of the Practice of Persian and other Near Eastern Languages, Harvard University—has translated the notation as literally meaning 'response has been written'. He also noted that in India 'jawâb' is the normal word for "letter", and not just "response"[45].



— Fig 56d. The 'jawâb' notation on a Poonch to Jammu registered 1894 cover. The date was written after the cover arrived in Jammu. The use of the 'jawâb' in 1894 is a very late date of use.

The 'jawâb' notation may, thus, mean "letter has been written" or "response has been written"; but what the specific postal practice the notation denotes has not been determined. Speculation has ranged from a non-postal, commercial money transfer to the sending back of various types of receipts or letters to even the actual return of the letter[33,45]. Mrs. C. Vonderlin has skillfully collated the features relating to the 'jawâb' notation found on Kashmir (and rarely on Jammu) covers and a partial list of her conclusions include: that in Kashmir, the practice started in the pre-stamp period and was mostly used in the early era of State stamps and only sporadically thereafter; that the notation may be dated and carry one or two dates both written after arrival; and that the notation has a higher than expected usage on covers which carried odd and (often rare) stamps[33,45]. The not infrequent positive correlation of the 'jawâb' notation with odd or rare stamps suggests to me that the marking was applied by both the Maharajah's Dak and later by the State post office on mail which was of considerable postal interest to them and which required tracking and receipt or return.

The 'jawâb' notation was not confined solely to Jammu, Kashmir and Poonch but is also found on covers mailed in British India[33].

Fig. 56. 1893 1/2 Anna QV stationery to Jammu via Kahuta in which the Poonch stamp has received strikes of both the 3 square Poonch State obliterator and the British India Jammu 'Dely' CDS.

Poonch Stamps with J&K Obliterations

Poonch stamps were sometimes obliterated with J&K obliterators. Mr. Bard speculated that this occurred when "the Poonch obliterator had been too lightly applied" and also "to indicate that there was no further postage payable on an item of mail where only Poonch postage had been pre-paid"[6]. There may possibly be other usages in addition to those proposed.

Postal History

Postal Practices in Poonch

exceptio probat regulam in casibus non exceptis

Poonch stamps were used nearly exclusively on mail sent to destinations outside of Poonch. This included British India, foreign destinations and Jammu and Kashmir. Except for few doubtful pieces of local (and possibly philatelic) mail and some mail to Jammu and Kashmir, both British India and Poonch postage were required **(Fig. 26, 51)**. If British India postage was lacking, a penalty, generally 2x of the omitted postage, was imposed and the cover often marked with a "Postage Due" obliterator **(Fig. 52, 56a)**.

Letters from British India with British India stamps but no Poonch stamps were treated as bearing and added postal fees were assessed on delivery[12]. Godfrey noted that "while unstamped letters from British India were treated as bearing in the Poonch capital and double postal fees levied on delivery"[12].

The Poonch State Post Office also levied a charge. Evans, quoting an earlier article, noted "levied on all letters from British India for delivery in Poonch territory a sum equal to the amount prepaid in Indian postage stamps"[10].

— Fig.56a. 1893 mail to Germany without British India Postage. The 1/2 Anna in Poonch postage was the usual rate for a minimum weight cover to enter into the Poonch State postal system. The cover also required at least a 1/2 Anna in British India postage to enter into the BI postal system at Kahuta and if absent, the rate required was usually doubled and a 'Postage Due' cachet applied. In 1893, the overseas BI letter rate to Germany was 2 1/2 Annas, (equivalent to 20 pfennig) which was doubled to 40 pfennig and charged to the addressee as a penalty. Poonch overseas mail without BI postage is rare. Ref.37.

British India and the Poonch State Post Offices at Kahuta

Indirect evidence overwhelmingly shows that the Poonch State Post maintained an extraterritorial office in Kahuta in British India (BI). Captain Godfrey, who was the Assistant Resident in Jammu and Kashmir stated that, "It was decided that Raja Moti Singh should have a branch office of his postal system at Kahuta in the Punjab"[12]. Poonch mail destined for British India, foreign countries and some to Jammu or Kashmir was transferred from this extraterritorial State office to the British India Post Office in Kahuta. There was no British India Post Office in Poonch until after the close of the State Post Office[13].

Poonch Mail to Jammu via Kahuta

Mail from Poonch to Jammu via Kahuta required both British India and Poonch postage, and, if British India postage was not present, a postage due cachet was applied. According to Mr. Bard, *prior* to the opening of the Uri route in July 1887, besides British India and Poonch postage, mail from Poonch to Jammu also required Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) prepaid postage; and, if J&K stamps were not present, the cover received a strike of the Dogri 'postage due' cachet as well as the Sialkot agent's duplex[6]. By mid-1888 or earlier, the requirement for the addition of J&K postage to Poonch mail going to Jammu via Kahuta was no longer in effect **(Fig. 57)**. After January 1891, mail from Poonch via Kahuta to Jammu, still required both British India and Poonch postage **(Fig. 58**) and, if British India postage was absent, the British India Post Office applied a 'postage due' cachet, unless transmission was outside its delivery range; in which case the Jammu State Post Office applied a dual language postage due cachet, and crossed out the British India Post Office 'Postage Due'. Final delivery was then made by the Jammu State Post Office[6].

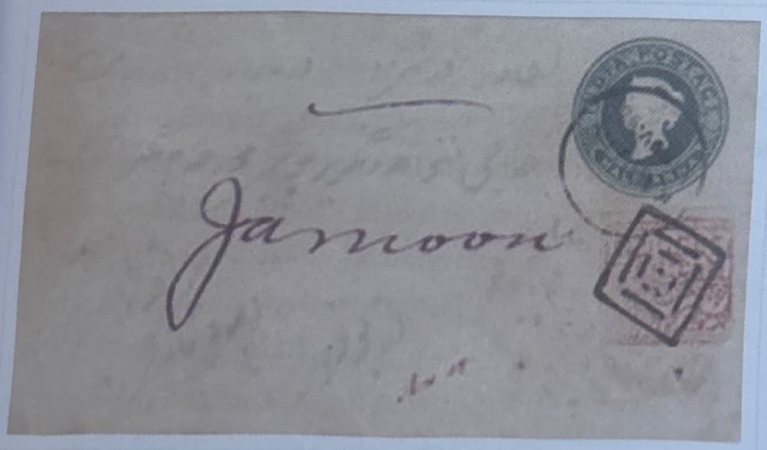
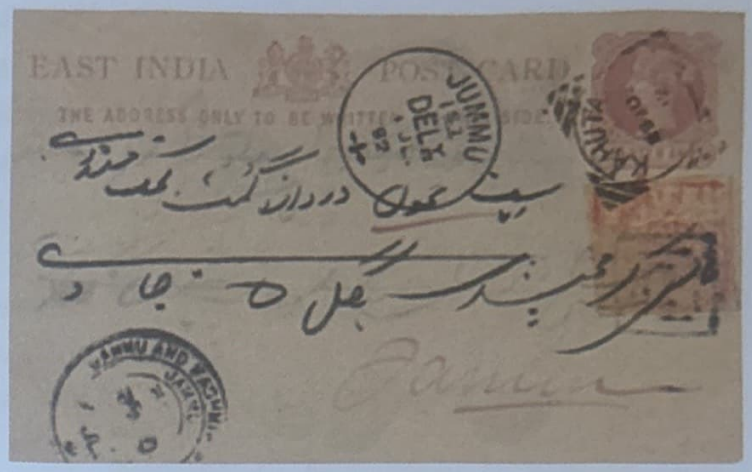


Fig. 57. November 1888 to Jammu (Jamoon) with the required 1/2 Anna Poonch stamp and the same in British India postage. Hand dated in Persian S.1945. Ex. Staal.

Poonch Mail to Srinagar

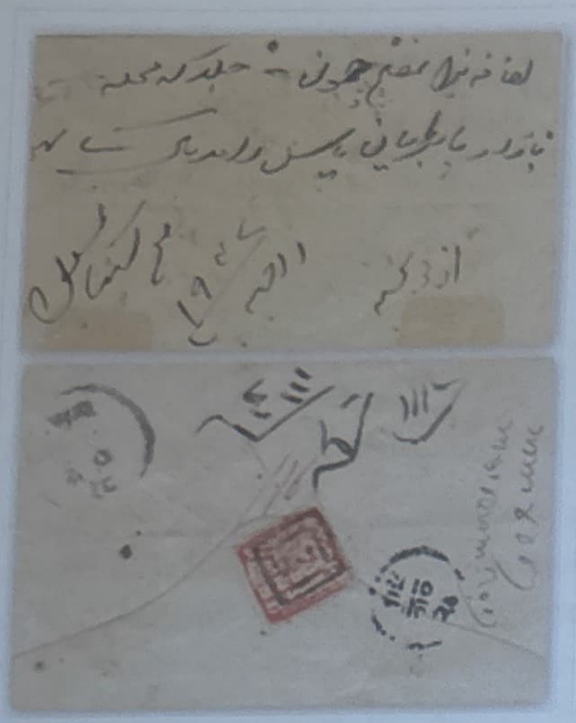
Mail from Poonch to Kashmir prior to 1887 is rare. Mr. Bard had not recorded any[6].He surmised that the most logical routing of such early mail would be through the BI 'Kahuta' P.O., to Rawalpindi, then the exchange office at Muree to the Kashmir BI post office at Srinagar. Unless the addressee lived within the city of Srinagar, the cover would then have entered the Kashmir State postal system for final delivery[6]. A July 1886 cover (back only) **(Fig. 59)** shows a different routing than that postulated by Mr. Bard. It went from the BI 'Kahuta' P.O. to the BI Sialkot P.O. and then onward to the BI P.O. at Srinagar. At some point in its travels it entered into the State postal system. Sadly the State circle and another mark are not sufficiently legible to know where. This cover back documents that one postal route from Poonch to Kashmir prior to the 1887 opening of the Uri route through the Haji Pir pass, was *Kahuta-Sialkot-Kashmir.*

Mail from Poonch sent to Kashmir after the opening in 1887 of the Uri route through the Haji Pir pass did not routinely require British India postage but only Poonch stamps[6,12] **(Fig. 60)**. In a reciprocal relationship, mail from both Poonch and Kashmir required only postage from the State post office where the mail originated, and such mail then traveled free of extra charge anywhere in either territory[12]. Both **Fig. 59** and a Poonch-Kahuta-Sialkot-Srinagar cover, also dated July 1886 and previously in the Garratt-Adams collection, illustrate that British India postage was also required prior to the opening of the Haji Pir



— Fig. 58. 1892 Postcard to Jammu via Kahuta showing both British India Postage and Poonch postage.

— Fig. 59. The 1/2 Anna yellow obliterated with th First Poonch seal used in July 1886. The 'Kahuta' transit mark and 'Postage Due/One Anna suggest that no BI postage was present. Mr. Bard had not seen any covers from Poonch to Kashmir prior to 1887. This cover went Kahuta, Sialkot, Kashmir. A State CDS and another are present. Type? The Kashmir 1st. Delivery CDS Bard BK 22a is reported used from July 30, 1886. This one is 17 days earlier (Ref.33).



— Fig. 59. 1890 Cover from Poonch to Jammu via Srinagar. No British India postage. Dated in Persian S.1947 Jeth 11= May 23, 1890. The Srinagar State cds reads Jeth 19= May 31, 1890. The Jammu State cds is Jeth 20 (or ? 25)=June 1, 1890 (or ?June 6, 1890). Addressed to Jammu. SG 12

Pass if mail from Poonch passed through the British India postal system via Kahuta. As a rule, Poonch mail sent to Kashmir by routes that did not cross into British India did not require BI postage. When the reciprocal postal policy began is still uncertain.

Between July 1887-January 1891 mail sent from Poonch to Srinagar shows a single circle Srinagar date stamp; after January 1891, the unified 3 circle CDS was used[6].

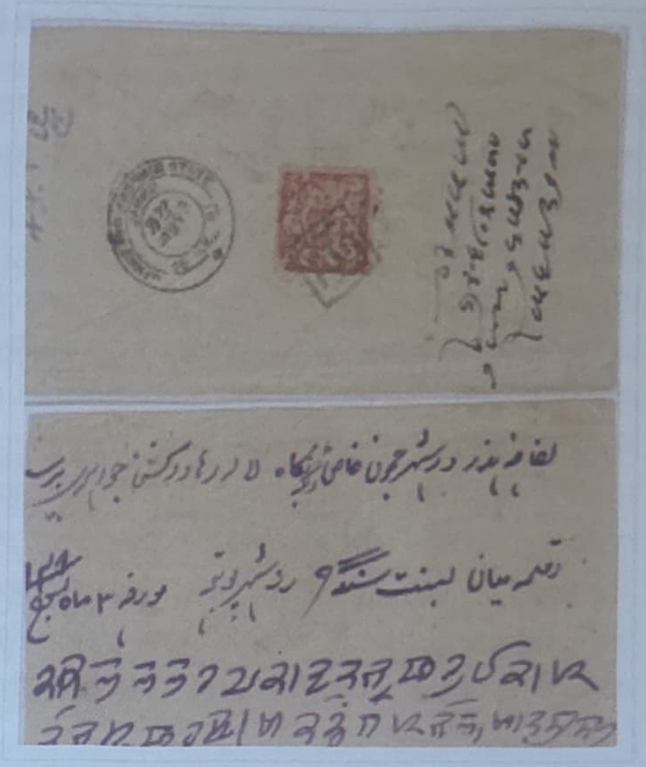
Poonch Mail to Jammu via Srinagar without British India Postage

At least, some Poonch-Jammu mail that went via Srinagar after the opening of the Uri route did not require British India postage **(Fig. 59 [1890])** and presumably reflected the reciprocal relationship between Poonch and Kashmir, in which mail from both Poonch and Kashmir required only postage from the State post office where the mail originated, and such mail then traveled free of extra charge anywhere in either territory[12].

— Fig. 60. Poonch cover to Srinagar without British India postage. Probably philatelic but illustrating that covers at this time period from Poonch to Srinagar did not require British India postage.

Poonch Mail to Jammu without British India Postage

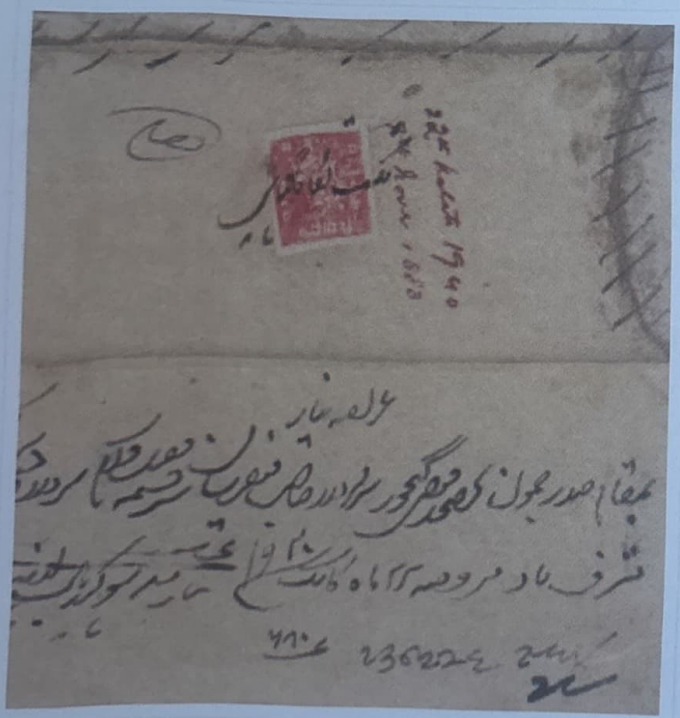
Some Poonch-Jammu mail with Poonch stamps but without either BI postage or 'Postage Due' markings presumably traveled internally to Jammu without crossing into British India territory. One such route from Poonch to Jammu was via Srinagar **(see Fig. 59)**. Other routes were probably also utilized depending on the season and weather conditions. A more direct route may have been from Poonch to Jammu through Rajaori **(see Fig 60a)**. Unlike some Jammu and Kashmir mail which may contain indications of routing (i.e., transit marks), Poonch mail to Jammu which did not traverse British India generally did not. **Fig. 60a** shows an 1891 cover addressed to 'dar shahr Jammu' (to the City of Jammu). It has Poonch State postage but no BI postage. The route it traveled is currently uncertain.



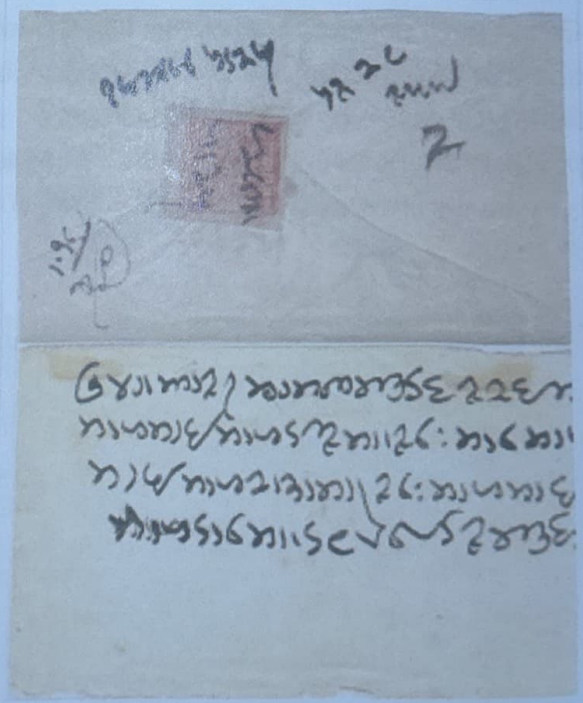
— Fig. 60a. A 1/2 Anna Poonch cover addressed to 'the City of Jammu' and with a handwritten date Asu 3, 1947=September 18, 1891. No British India postage and no 'postage due' cachet is present. A J&K 3 ring Unified Jammu CDS is dated '26 SE. 1891'.

Poonch Mail to Jammu without British India or State Markings

A small group of 6p. (SG 1) covers are known with manuscript cancels from the later period of manuscript cancels (~1881-83) which show 1) manuscript cancels in either Indo-Persian or Dogri-Takri script, 2) no British India postage or 'postage due' marks and, 3) *no formal evidence of passing through either the Poonch State, British India or J&K State Post Offices*. Mr. Bard described such a cover, "In over 20 years I have seen only one cover which does not show the postal marking of either Poonch, Kahuta or Uri, or indeed of any sorting office in India or J&K"[6]. The cover described by Mr. Bard was originally in the Dawson collection [Lot 496] and bears a 6p. stamp manuscript cancelled in Dogri-Takri[6,8]. Mr. Bard wondered if this cover were local, "Were stamps of Punch ever used to prepay postage on internal mail?"[6]. **Fig. 60b** shows a cover which is similar to that described by Mr. Bard. The 6p (SG 1) is hand canceled in Indo-Persian and on the cover is written the manuscript date "Katik 22, 1940 = Nov 6, 1883". The word 'Jammu' appears on the address side and presumably represents the destination. The cover was originally in the collection of George Masson (among the earliest and most knowledgeable Poonch collectors) who annotated the cover in his distinctive writing. In my opinion, it is probable that this cover



— Fig. 60b. The 6p. (SG1) with manuscript cancel. On the cover front is written "Katik 22, 1940= Nov 6, 1883". The word "Jammu' appears on the address side and presumably represents the destination. The cover shows no formal evidence of passing through either the Poonch State, British India or J&K State Post Offices.



— Fig.60c. A manuscript canceled 6p. (SG1) on a cover which has provisionally been identified as dating to January 1884. Addressed to Jammu (Ref. 43).

both a) transited through the Poonch State postal system on its way to *Jammu* and b) is not 'local'. Had it been carried privately, the sender would probably not have spent the ½ Anna for Poonch State postage.

Another 6p. cover with manuscript cancellation, no BI postage or 'postage due' and no formal evidence of transiting the Poonch State, BI or J&K postal systems is shown in **Fig. 60c**. The 6p. (SG 1) is manuscript cancelled in Dogri-Takri. Mrs. Carol Vonderlin has identified the month and day date, 'Poh 25' on both the stamp and cover with a possible year date '1940' also written on the cover (= January 7, 1884). Mrs. Vonderlin has also determined that 'Jammu' in Dogri-Takri is written on the cover[42].

Mr. Bard's cover and the two shown **(Fig.60b, 60c)** suggest a major change temporarily occurred in the transmittal of some Poonch mail in the 1881 to early 1884 period. Not only was the First Poonch seal not used to obliterate the Poonch 6p. (SG 1), there is no formal evidence (i.e., CDS, transit or arrival marks) that these covers passed through either the Poonch State, British India or J&K postal systems. Somewhat weak indirect evidence suggests, however, that they did and that in, at least, several instances their destination was Jammu. Hopefully, as more of these interesting 6p. late manuscript cancelled covers without BI postage and no formal evidence of passing through the Poonch State, British India or J&K Postal systems are reported, new evidence may emerge and clarify their status, if there were other destinations besides Jammu, the routes they followed, and possibly illuminate what caused the unusual variance in postal practice.

Mail to Poonch

Although the number of existing post cards and covers sent from Poonch is moderate, the volume of incoming mail to Poonch is small. The result is that the ratio of still existing outgoing to incoming Poonch mail is unexpectedly large. The reason for this disparity is not clear, although part of the explanation may be that outgoing mail routinely contained Poonch State stamps and was, thus, attractive to collectors; whereas incoming mail did not and was preserved less frequently.

— Fig. 60d. Coverback. Earliest recorded mail to Poonch and earliest recorded use of the Second Seal. August 1885.

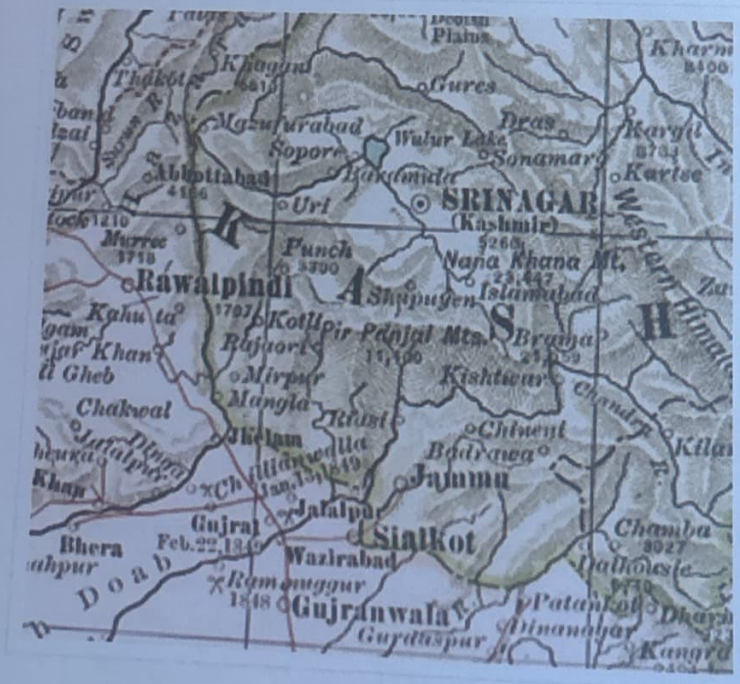
The earliest recorded mail to Poonch is a cover back mailed from Jammu which arrived in Kahuta August 14, 1885 **(Fig.60d)**. Since the first *outgoing* stamped mail from Poonch dates to 1878, it seems highly likely that incoming mail to Poonch prior to August 1885 will eventually be recorded. The cover back

shows two 1/4 Anna New Rectangular Browns (SG 141) paying the local 1/2 Anna postal rate. The stamps are obliterated with a signature with a first name [Kunden[49]?, Kurtar[49]?, Kantem[42]?] and last name 'Singh'. The stamps are obliterated with the 12 bar-1 of Jammu (Bard SJ7). Two seals are superimposed: the Second Seal and the first Jammu Circle in Dogri (Bard SJ4). The first Jammu Circle is dated Savan 29 (or 26?). The Indo-Persian year date reads '1942' so the Jammu Circle date is either 'August 12, 1885' [or less likely 'August 9, 1885']. A British India Kahuta two line arrival circle (BIB1) is dated '14 Aug 1885'. Another transit marker is also present dated' Au.12, 1885'. Its origin is obscure but may possibly be 'Sialkot'.

The second earliest recorded incoming mail to Poonch is a cover which originated in Srinagar and bears the Second Poonch Seal and a Kahuta receipt mark. The cover is dated May 1886 and went Srinagar-Jammu-Sialkot-Kahuta[6]. A year later after the Uri route from Poonch opened a similar cover presumably may have traveled Srinagar to Poonch via the Haji Pir pass.

Postal Rates

Postal rates in Poonch were probably similar to those current in India[6] with a 1/2 Anna single-letter rate for weights up to about 5.8 g. (1/2 tola) and an extra 1/2 Anna for each additional 1/2 tola[12]. In 1893 covers sent from Poonch abroad required a minimum of ½ Anna in Poonch postage for delivery into the British India mail system for onward transmission **(Fig 56a)**. This rate differs from covers sent abroad from Jammu and Kashmir which usually required a minimum of 1 Anna in State postage. The Kashmir practice of allowing foreign visitors a preferential mailing rate did not exist in Poonch.



— Fig. 60e. Poonch (Punch) City. 'Kahu ta (Kahuta)' is in British India and is shown slightly South of Rawalpindi. Reproduced from *The Century Atlas*, India Northern copyright 1897.

In 1880, the Fourth Issue one-Anna was introduced for heavier letters, and a new four-Anna stamp was issued which could pay the registration rate (which was the same rate as in Jammu and Kashmir) prior to 1882. During 1882, the registration rated decreased to 2 Anna. On some registered non-foreign destination covers the amount

paid in Poonch stamps was the same or close to that paid in British India postage **(Fig. 61, 62)**. However, on still other registered non-foreign mail, the amount paid in British India stamps differs from the amount in Poonch postage. Hopefully, further study will bring a better understanding of the postal regulations that determined proper franking. Many Poonch covers sent abroad were in response to inquires or requests for Poonch stamps from collectors or dealers. One Superintendent of the Poonch Stamp Office—Abdullah (Abdoolla) Kahn—answered a number of these request **(Fig. 61)**. The Superintendent also wrote and signed postcards which provide identifyable examples of his handwriting[6]. An agent for the Superintendent—Bul**van** Singh (*letters uncertain)—sometimes signed outgoing mail as well. His handwriting is slightly different from Abdullah Kahn's.

— Fig. 61. 189? Registered. 2 1/2 in Poonch Postage matched by 2 1/2 in British India Postage. English script probably that of Abdullah Khan, Superintendent of the Poonch State Stamp Office.

The take over of the Poonch State Post Office by the Imperial Post Office of British India was 1 Nov. 1894, and the stamps of Poonch were withdrawn from use on 31 December 1894[12]. Poonch mail is occasionally seen with proper markings which passed through the postal system for a while after closure.

— Fig. 62. 1894 Registered 'jawâb' cover with 5 Anna in Poonch postage and 5 Anna in British India postage on front. The cover originated in Poonch and went through the British India Post Office in Kahuta on its way to Jammu. The jawâb notation is only rarely seen on Poonch mail.

— Fig. 63. 1891 Registered cover to Germany. 6 1/2 Anna of British India stamps and 2 1/2 Anna of Poonch postage.

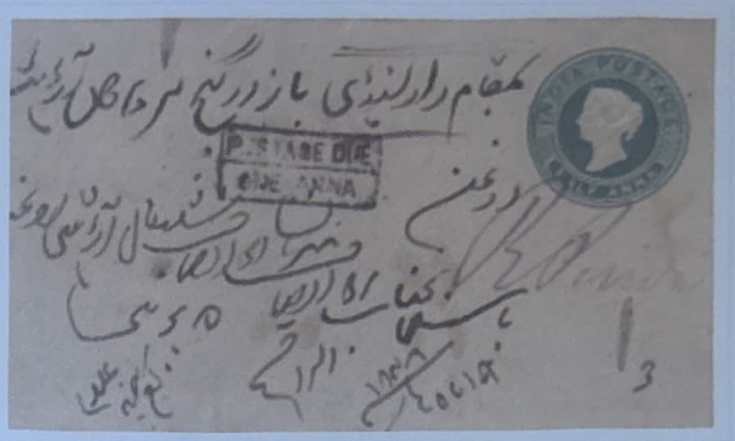
Outgoing Poonch Mail with British India Postage but without Kahuta CDS

Nearly all outgoing Poonch mail with BI postage was canceled at the BI Post Office in Kahuta. Occasionally a cover is found on which the BI postage was either not canceled or was canceled at a location other than the BI Post Office in Kahuta. **Fig. 63a** shows a Registered 2 Anna postal stationary envelope (Neurgaonkar RE 1) addressed to Bombay and mailed in 1893 in which the embossed blue QV and the 1 Anna brown-purple (SG 88) are canceled by a F-51/ AUG 7 CDS rather than a 'Kahuta' circle in barred square which was the CDS in use at the BI Kahuta Post Office in 1893. The F-51 belonged to the stationary Numbered Mail Office at Delhi and was in use from 1892 to 1899[43]. As the cost of sorting letters in a railway carriage was expensive, the BI Post established stationary offices at large junction stations were the interval of time between the arrival and departure of trains was used for the sorting of correspondence[44]. Mr. Max Smith has postulated that this cover first went to the Poonch State Post Office, where the State three box square was used to obliterate the three ½ Anna blue-green wove batonne Poonch stamps (SG 50), and the cover was then processed at the British India Post Office at Kahuta where the 'Kahuta' Registration cachet was applied[44]. The clerk apparently failed to cancel the BI postage and the stationery was placed into a 'Direct' or 'Forward' mail bag which was used between large post offices to curtail the sorting work done in the Traveling Post Offices. The stationary probably traveled directly from Kahuta to the Mail Office in Delhi where the bag was opened, the failure of cancellation of

— Fig. 63a. 1893 Registered Stationery from Poonch to Bombay. The British India postage is canceled by the F-51 CDS of the stationary Numbered Mail Office at Delhi.

the BI postage discovered; and the F-51 CDS applied prior to sending the stationary onward to its destination in Bombay[44]. Such mail is very scarce.

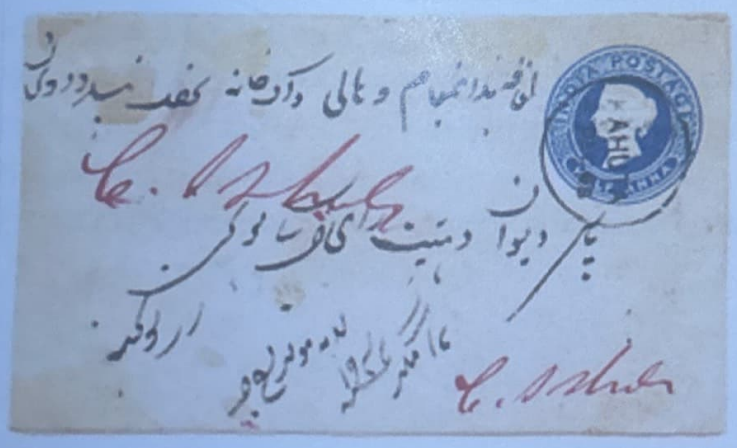
Fig. 63b shows a ½ Anna QV Postal Stationery envelope (Neurgaonkar EN 13) in which the BI postage is not canceled. The ½ Anna Poonch Stamp was obliterated by the State '3 box square' obliterator and the stationery transferred to the BI Post Office at Kahuta where the 'Postage Due/ 1 Anna' cachet was applied. Why the embossed ½ Anna was not canceled and a 'Postage Due' applied is not clear.



— Fig.63b. Half Anna stationery dated 1948 har 1(9?)= July 1(?), 1891 to Rawalpindi. The green QV is not canceled. Instead, a 'Postage Due 1 Anna' was applied. On the cover back is a Poonch 1/2 Anna obliterated with the three box square.

Postal Stationery

British India Queen Victoria embossed ½ Anna blue postal stationery is usually seen used in conjunction with the 1877 6p. or 1880 ½ Anna on yellowish white wove. A late date of use is December 4, 1885 **(Fig. 64)**.



— Fig. 64. 1885 Dec. 'Kahuta' Circle (2 lines the month, day and year date on second line).

— Fig. 65. 1894 The One Anna postal stationery with Kahuta Circle in Square CDS.

— Fig. 66. 1889. Two Annas Registered stationery.

— Fig. 67. 2 Anna 6p. in black on the 4 Anna 6 p. orange. Illegible date. Registered philatelic cover to Messieurs Ullman, Delhi showing overfranking. The 1 p. stamp pair has one stamp sideways.

British India Queen Victoria embossed ½ Anna green postal stationery is by far the most common postal stationery used in Poonch **(Fig. 29, 41)**.

The 1 Anna brown embossed Queen Victoria postal stationery used in Poonch is scarce. It is known used in July 1878 and intermittently to June 1894 **(Fig. 65)**.

The 2 Annas Queen Victoria Registered postal stationery is somewhat scarce used in Poonch. An example is dated December 1889 **(Fig. 66)**.

The 2 Anna 6p. in black on the 4 Anna 6 p. orange is scarce in Poonch. A philatelic example is shown **(Fig. 67)**.

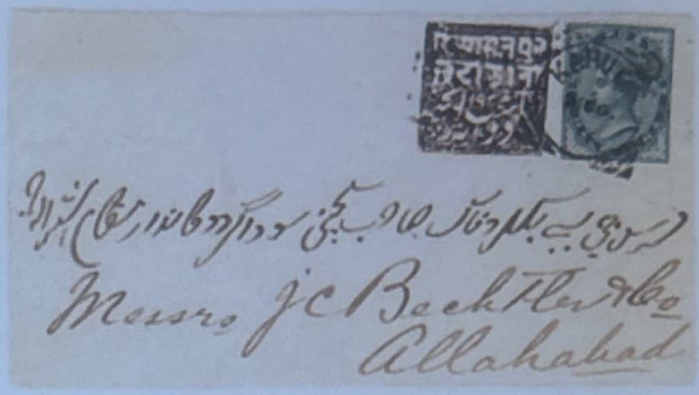
Post Cards

Unlike Kashmir, Poonch did not have State Post Cards. The post card usually used from Poonch was the East India Quarter Anna embossed Queen Victoria which required a 1p. (1/4 Anna) Poonch stamp **(Fig. 28)**.

Universal Postal Union cards are very rare from Poonch. An 1889 German reply paid UPU card from Poonch to Berlin, Germany is known which has an added 1p. (1/4a.) obliterated by the Poonch three square obliterator[19]. Most of the *Kashmir* UPU cards seen have an added 1 Anna J&K New Rectangular stamp. Other Kashmir UPU cards have no J&K postage[37]. Apparently Poonch and Kashmir differed in the minimum rate in State stamps required for UPU covers sent abroad.

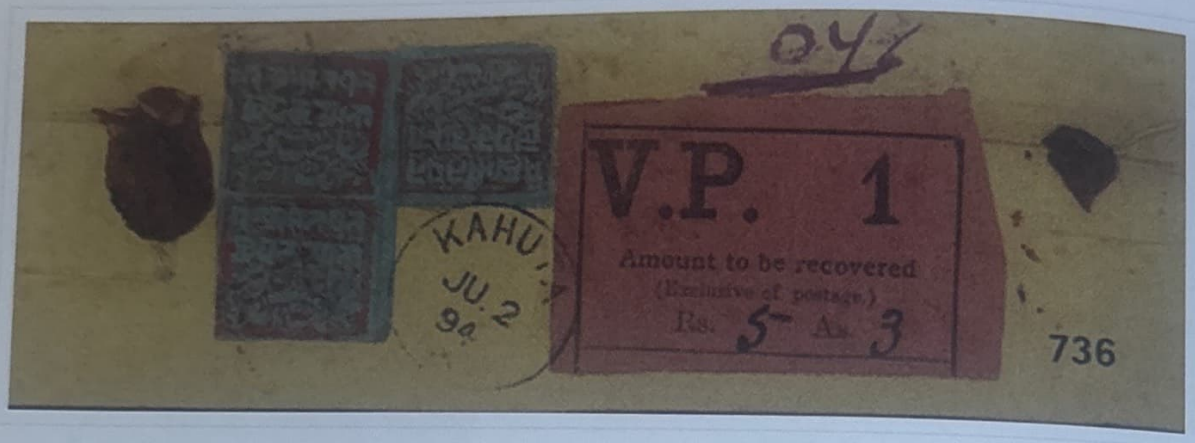
Value Payable

A VP service (like our COD) service was present in Poonch but apparently originated shortly prior to the close of the State P.O. A cover bearing three 1 Anna rose on blue and a "VP1" label tied by Kahuta in arc is dated July 2 94 CDS **(Fig.67a)**[19].



— Fig. 68. 1892 October 2 Anna Black on white with 1/2 Anna British India Philatelic P2

— Fig. 69. 1891. Poonch, Srinagar, Gulmarg, Sopur 3 ring 'Unified' CDS. '
'9 bar 9' Srinagar State P.O. Philatelic P3 cover



— Fig. 67a Value Payable cover from Poonch to the Punjab. Image reproduced from Spink, London March 22, 2002 Lot 736.

Philatelic Covers

Several different groups of correspondence from Poonch are known in which a number of the covers are over franked or carry implausible frankings.

The addressees include:

P1) Messrs. Ullmann, Hirschhorn and Co, Delhi. At least some of these covers are addressed in an English script in purple ink that resembles that of the Superintendent of the Poonch Stamp Office, Abdullah Khan; and on the one imaged the rate is proper **(Fig. 61)**. Other covers to the same address may have implausible frankings **(Fig. 67)**.

P2) Messrs J. C. Bechtler & Co., Allahabad. Some of these are properly franked. Many are not. An arrival date in Allahabad of "24 October 1892" is common although September 1892 arrival dates are also seen **(Fig. 68)**.

P3) Addressed to Kashmir with Poonch stamps obliterated with the Srinagar State Post Office '9 Bar 9' Obliterator and 3 Ring cancels of Srinagar, Gulmargh and Sopur dated 1891. Although a number of these covers are over franked **(Fig. 69)**, others do pay plausible rates. These covers do follow the practice that covers from Poonch to Srinagar via the Uri route did not require British India postage.

P4) Volkart Brothers. Multiple items from Poonch (and from other sites in India as well) were sent to the Volkarts at several destinations. At least two from Poonch to Bombay used either postal stationery that was rarely used in Poonch, had rare seals, or both.

Forgeries

A number of forgeries are known[8,23] **(Fig. 70-77)**. Some are illustrated here. Captain S.H. Godfrey warned about Poonch stamps obliterated with the "L" obliterator which was not used in Poonch and also obliterated with the postmark of the British Post Office at Poonch, which was not opened till after the stamps became obsolete[24]. I am of the *opinion* that the images shown below are forgeries and have placed arrows on some of them indicating, what I believe, are differences from the genuine. I have chosen features that first attract my attention when I look at a particular stamp. With many forgeries that are not photocopies or photographs of a genuine stamp, when one feature is identified as inaccurate, other incorrect elements in the design become apparent. I have usually identified only one or several key features in a forgery. A number of modern forgeries are photocopies or produced from photographs and their identification is more difficult. Then visual identification depends on assessing the ink and paper- both of which may be difficult to illustrate. I have only one example of a number of these forgeries, and it is quite possible that a feature that I have identified as germane is a fortuitous finding caused, for example, by grime or over-inking. The *papers* used for printing genuine Poonch stamps do not fluoresce under long wave UV light. If the *paper* fluoresces, the stamp presumably is a forgery. The design of *some* Poonch forgeries fluoresce (for example the F1a- 2 Anna forgery)[41] a variety of colors including orange under long wave UV light. Thus, the presence of orange fluorescence does not guarantee that a stamp is genuine and printed with aniline dye.

Fig.70. F1-1/2 Anna Forgery. Red arrow= in the forgery the tips of the Persian characters below the horizontal line do not cross above the line. In the original, the tips cross above the line. Printed in either red or black ink. Some red examples fluoresce yellow orange under long wave UV light. Nearly always found obliterated with forged three box square (Ref.23).

Fig 70a. F2-1/2 Anna. This forgery is most easily identified by a forged CDS which shows 'Poonch' in an arch and the date '5-5-84. The stamp forgery shows the top of the first Nagari character in the top line is incomplete (down arrow), the 'leg' of the last character in the top line resembles an 'arrow' instead of curving downward (upward arrow). The lower border is bowed upward . It is not well seen here (up arrow). Colors: brown-carmine.

Fig. 70b. F3-1/2 Anna Forgery. Left horizontal arrow= the last Nagari letter is tilted towards 1 o'clock and the medial stroke is more horizontal. In the genuine, the character is nearly upright. Green arrow= in the forgery the tip of the first Persian letter is a blob. Black down arrow= The Persian '3' is different. yellow-green laid paper or green paper. This forgery is also found obliterated with a forged J&K obliterator.

Fig. 70c. F4-1/2 Anna Forgery. Upward arrow= extra small blob at base – a constant finding? Persian lettering more irregular than genuine. White laid paper.

Fig 70d. F5-1/2 Anna Forgery. Tip of Persian character does not cross horizontal line. In genuine, it does. Linear ink in margins, not usually found in genuine stamps. Thick laid buff paper. Image courtesy of Phil Lunn.

Fig. 70e. F6-1/2 Anna Forgery. The paper in this modern forgery is distinctive and one not used by the State postal authorities. The paper is thin and has small bluish linear, curvilinear and punctate inclusions or surface threads which are usually visible. (Also see F6-2 Anna, F8-4 Anna, F5-1p) for other forgeries on similar papers.

Fig. 71. F1-1 Anna forgery. Downward arrows=in the forgery the tips of the Persian letters do not cross the horizontal line. In the genuine, they do. Horizontal arrow=in the forgery the frame lines are too wide. This finding may not be appreciated in heavily inked examples. The lateral border of the second Nagari character on the second line (partially superimposed on the left sided arrow is too straight giving the character the appearance of a rectangle. Nearly always found with the 3 square obliteration. Printed in red on green wove paper. Officials printed on wove, toned paper. Often mounted on small piece (Ref.23).

Fig 71a. F2-1 Anna Forgery. This forgery is usually identified by a forged obliterator either, as in this example, with two widely spaced rings or a double circle with closely spaced rings with a semicircular "Poonch" (see F2-1/2 Anna, F2-1 Anna, F7a-4 Anna). Neither the close double circle or the wide double circle CDS was used by the Poonch State Post Office. Wove paper, shades of red and vermilion. In lightly printed examples, the ink may not cover the surface of the paper evenly leaving many punctate areas where the paper is visible.

Fig 71b. F2a-1 Anna Forgery. In the forgery the left end of the horizontal line is often not visible and is replaced by a series of dots. In the genuine, the line usually continues to the left border. The ink used in the forgery is different from the originals and does not coat the paper as smoothly. Laid paper with closely spaced lines.

Fig 71c. F2b -1 Anna forgery. This forgery looks quite similar to the F2 and F2a,b- 1 Anna forgeries and differs in only a few details. In the F2b-1 forgery, the left side of the horizontal dividing line is incomplete (upward white arrow) and the second Nagari letter top line and the 4th Nagari letter second line are subtly different. It is uncertain if the differences between F2-1, and the F2a 1 Anna forgery represent minor alterations to the design or result from inking. The ink differs from the genuine 1 Anna in that it does not coat as well leaving punctate areas where the paper color shows through. Laid paper. Also found in red with or without a forged three box square. The red version may fluoresce a dark brown under long wave UV light.

Fig 71d. This is another more heavily inked example of the F2b -1 Anna forgery. The ink quality differs from the genuine and does not coat as well, and punctate areas of the colored paper are visible. Laid paper with closely spaced lines.

Fig 71e. F3-1 Anna forgery.

Fig. 71f. F4-1 Anna. This forgery is most easily identified by the paper which is wove and almost transparent. It differs from pelure paper in that it not stiff. This nearly transparent paper is not found genuinely used in Poonch. Upper arrow: The lateral limb of the character is short as compared to most genuine 1 Anna examples.

Fig 71g. F5-1 Anna Forgery. Downward arrows= the tops of Nagari letters 3 and 4 in the top row are below the adjacent. In the genuine they are at the same level as the tops of the adjacent letters. The Nagari letters are in general badly formed ,i.e., the first Nagari letter in the second row. The colored background has a 'finger print' appearance. Thin toned wove paper.

Fig.71h. The 1 Anna forgery on green paper. The paper fluoresces slightly. Genuine Poonch papers, as a rule, do not fluoresce. Note also the pencil line which is often drawn between genuine stamps but is sometimes also included on forgeries. The paper has very closely packed laid lines not found on genuine Poonch papers. The design is probably reproduced from a genuine stamp. The ink distribution is patchy.

Fig. 71i. F7-1 Anna Forgery. This forgery shares a key feature with the forgery in Fig. 71 (F1-1 Anna Forgery) in that the tips of the Persian letters do not cross the horizontal line (downward white arrows). In the genuine, they do. The first Nagari letter in the top line does not protrude through the upper frame line (downward black arrow). In the genuine 1 Anna, the first Nagari character protrudes through the upper frame line. The design fluoresces yellow orange under long wave UV light. Forged 3 box square.

Fig. 72. F1-2 Anna Forgery. White down arrows= in the forgery the tips of the Persian letters do not cross the horizontal dividing line. In the original, they do. Yellow arrow= in the forgery, 7 dots are present. In the genuine an 'S' and 2 dots are present. Green arrow= the forgery has fewer dots here than the original, and the corner decoration differs. Officials printed in black ink (Ref.23).

Fig. 72a. F1a-2 Anna Forgery. Green upward arrow= in the forgery, the last two Nagari letters in the top line are joined. This forgery is nearly always found obliterated with the three box square. Black arrow= in the forgery the left frame line is absent. Printed in red on either white, yellow green, or gray paper. Officials printed in black (Ref.23).

Fig. 72b. F2-2 Anna Forgery. Right pointing blue arrow= The detail in both lower corners is less detailed than in the genuine. Upward blue arrow= in the forgery, some examples show no ink deposition along a short segment of border. Yellow arrow= some examples of the forgery show an oval of ink as seen here.

Fig. 72c. F3-2 Anna forgery. White arrow= partial extra frame line. Red arrow= this Persian character in the forgery is partially segmented and this part is too large. Yellow arrow= The first and second Nagari letters are misshapen, particularly the second which has a rounded top. In the original, the top is flat.

Fig. 72d. F4-2 Anna Forgery. Right smaller arrow and left larger horizontal arrows= less detail in corners than in genuine. Up arrow= less detail inferior to Persian '37'. Down arrow= break in horizontal line. The ink in the forgery does not cover the paper well. It shows small areas where the paper is still seen. Laid gray blue paper.

Fig. 72e. F5-2 Anna Forgery.

Fig. 72f. F6-2 Anna Forgery. This forgery sometimes has streaks of linear color adjacent to the stamp. The paper is one not found used for genuine Poonch stamps. The paper is thin and has small linear and curvilinear inclusions or surface threads. (See also F6-½ Anna, F8-4 Anna, F5-1p. for forgeries on similar paper).

Fig. 72g. F-7 2 Anna Forgery. This forgery is usually identified by a forged CDS with two closely spaced rings with a "Poonch" in arc dated '5-5-84' (see also F2-1/2 Anna, F2-1 Anna, F7a-4 Anna). No Circular CDS was used by the Poonch State Post Office. Wove paper, shades of red and vermilion.

Fig. 73. F1-4 Anna Forgery. In the forgery the top of the first Nagari character does not project through the frame line which is continuous. In the genuine, the frame line is interrupted and the character extends above the level of the medial adjacent frame line. In the forgery, there are additional dots in the border which are absent in the genuine. A 'centipede' appearance is sometimes present, not seen in the genuine. Printed in red or black (Ref.23).

Fig. 73a. F1 variety-4 Anna Forgery. This is a variety of 73 in which the 'centipede' appearance is not present and the 'flying bird' is better appreciated. Black Arrow= in the forgery, the left corner decoration looks like a flying bird. In the genuine, the decoration consist of dots and commas in mirror image. White arrow= in the forgery, the white borderline extends above the last Nagari letter. In th genuine, the white border line is interrupted and the first character projects above it (Ref. 23). Image reproduced from the internet.

Fig. 73b. F2-4 Anna forgery. In the forgery, the dots peripheral to the borderline are too small.

Fig. 73c. F3-4 Anna Forgery. White upper horizontal arrow= double row of dots above borderline. In the genuine only one row is present. Lower horizontal white arrow = first Persian letter top row is fragmented. Wove paper.

Fig. 73d. F4-4 Anna forgery. White arrow= in the forgery, an additional short curvilinear line is sometimes present, not seen in the genuine. Wove batonne. The ink has small streaks which is uncharacteristic for the genuine. Ink is sometimes present in the margins.

Fig. 73e. F4a- 4 Anna forgery? Thought to be a forgery because of the appearance of the ink. The lack of detail related to heavy inking in some places and under-inking in others makes it difficult to compare to the genuine. Has several features suggestive that it is similar to the F4-4 Anna forgery. Image reproduced from the internet.

Fig.73f. Fig. 73f. F6-4 Anna Forgery. The leg of the 4th. Nagari letter in the upper row is inked over(upward arrow. The Indo-Persian character under the year date is fragmented (lower upward arrow). Ink blobs of various sizes are sometimes found in the margins (left horizontal arrow). The horizontal dividing line is broken in the center. On buff or white wove paper. Printed in black or red. On white paper the design may be seen on the back.

Fig.73g. F7-4 Anna Forgery. The design of this forgery most likely is a photocopy or a photograph of a genuine stamp. The wove paper is very thin and is semi- transparent and is one not known used by the State Post Office in Poonch. Also found on semi-transparent yellow paper.

Fig. 73h. F7a-4 Anna Forgery. The design of this forgery is, most likely, a photocopy or a photograph of a genuine stamp. The CDS with a semi-circular 'Poonch' within a double circle was not known used by the Poonch State Post Office (see also F2-1/2 and F2-1 Anna for similar). The ink used in the forgery coats differently than in the genuine and leaves punctate areas of paper visible. Wove paper.

Fig.73i. F8-4 Anna Forgery. Black arrow=in some examples of this forgery, the limb of the fourth Nagari character in the top row is partially or completely covered by ink. This forgery is probably a photocopy or photographic reproduction of a genuine stamp. The paper is one not used in Poonch, being thin but with faint blue linear or curvilinear inclusions or surface threads. (See also F6-1/2 Anna, F6-2 Anna, F5-1p.). Image reproduced from the internet.

Fig 73j. F9- 4 Anna forgery on wove. Several of the Nagari characters differ considerably from the genuine (arrows). Photo courtesy of John Schneider.

73k. F10-4 Anna Forgery. This is most likely a photocopy or photograph of a genuine stamp. It is printed on laid paper which is more 'springy' and is stiffer than those used on genuine stamps. Image courtesy of John Schneider.

Fig. 74. F1-1p. Forgery. Black arrows= in the genuine, the corner ornaments are small rosettes of circles; in the forgery the corner ornaments are very different resembling tridents, antlers and odd shaped crowns. Printed in red or black (Ref. 23).

Fig.74a. F2-1p Forgery. White arrow = in the forgery two notches are present at the periphery of the left border: one at 7 and one at 8 o'clock. These may have been duplicated from an original stamp which the forgers used as a model. Upright white& orange arrow= the lower characters in the inner oval are strikingly wrong. Horizontal white and orange arrow= multiple characters are deformed. (Ref. 23).

Fig 74b. F2a-1p Forgery. This is similar to the F2-1p. Forgery but differs in some respects including that the notches at the periphery of the left border are not as easily seen and several characters have been redrawn including those identified by the horizontal white and orange upward arrow and the white and orange arrow head. Both alterations still markedly differ from the genuine.

Fig. 74c. F3-1p. Forgery. Red Arrow= in the forgery, these decorations are very different from the genuine. Image reproduced from the internet.

Fig. 74d. F4-1p. Forgery. It is hard to characterize this forgery because the inking procedure has resulted in a lack of detail. White arrow= in the forgery, the lowest left Nagari character and adjacent decorations are oddly formed. There are additional linear lines paralleling the border of the stamp. Thick, stiff buff paper. Image courtesy of Phil Lunn.

Fig. 74e. F5-1p. Forgery. Black arrow= in the forgery, the lowest left Nagari character looks more like a short horizontal line with a flying bird below it. The paper is one that is not known used by the State Post Office, having linear and curvilinear inclusions and threads on its surface (see also F6-1/2 Anna, F6-2 Anna, F8-4 Anna) for forgeries on similar paper.

Fig. 74f. F6a-1p. Forgery. This forgery is similar to F6-1p. Yellow arrow= in the forgery, the lowest left Nagari character looks more like a short horizontal line with a flying bird below it. The paper in this example is toned wove and is similar to some used in Poonch by the State Post Office.

Fig. 74g. F7-1p Forgery? ? or genuine??. The detail is not optimal. What detail is present corresponds closely with the genuine although several Nagari letters look suspecious.i.e., the lowest letter in the border on the left. The paper is laid batonne and is similar to some used by the State Post Office.

Fig 74h. F8-1p Forgery on laid batonne paper. The differences from the genuine are not subtle. The laid and batonne lines are sharply defined and easy to see. Forged obliterator' which was not used by the State Post Office. Image courtesy of John Schneider.

Fig. 75. F1-6p. Green arrow= in the forgery the last two year numbers touch. In the genuine, they are separated. Black arrow= the appearance of the value differs from the genuine. Also found in red-orange on yellowish paper. Examples so far seen have forged 'cancels'

Fig. 75a. F2-. A SG T1 or T2 type Forgery with forged 3 square obliterator.

Fig.75b. F3-6p.

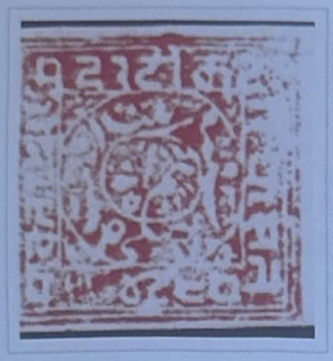


Fig 76. F2-1/2Anna SG 2. Certified by the BPA as a forgery.

Fig 76a. F1-1879 (SG 2) forgery with forged CDS. The single or double circle CDS in which a semi-circular 'Poonch" may also be sometimes visible was not used by the Poonch State Post Office. Yellow arrow= many deformed characters , one of which is identified.

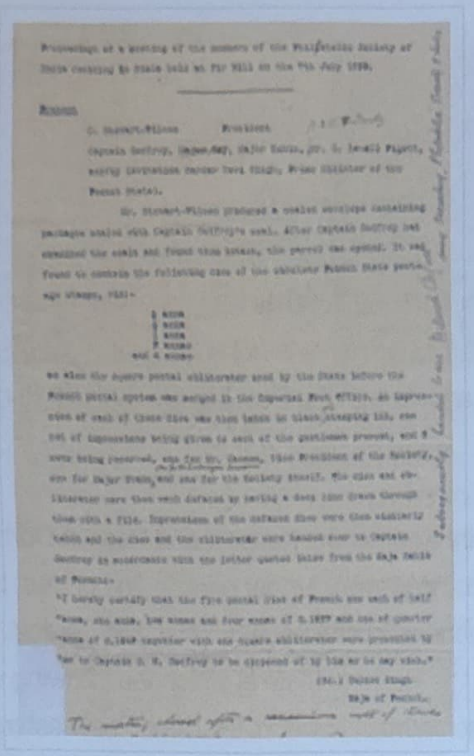
Fig.76b. F3-1879 (SG 2). Image reproduced from the internet.

Die Defacement

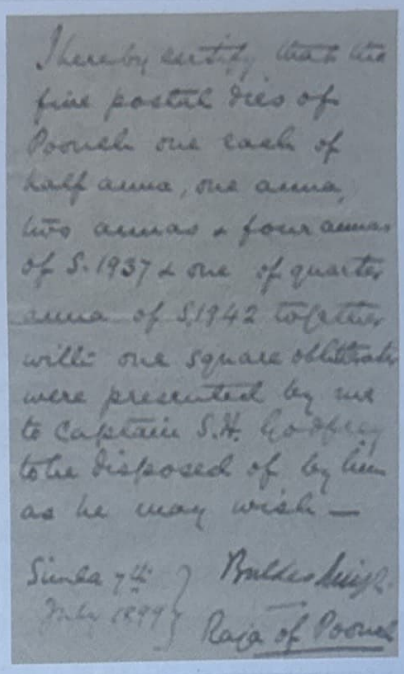
Defacement of the Dies

"In October 1896, the dies of the 1/4a, 1/2a and 2a. were handed to Capt. Godfrey for safe custody. The dies of the 1 a. and 4 a. values were not handed over until July 1898 as stamps of these values were still used as fiscals"[5]. The exact sequence and the dates of events is not entirely clear. Capt. Godfrey wrote he deposited the dies of the 1/2a, 1a, 2a, and 4a with the Post Master General, Punjab in March 1899 for subsequent defacement in July 1899[25].

Captain Godfrey wrote: "... I forwarded an unofficial inquiry whether the Kashmir and Poonch Durbars would consider the defacement of the dies of their stamps, to prevent further printing and protect the interest of collectors who might have bought stamps of genuine postal issue[50]. They both agreed. The ceremony of defacement was carried out at a meeting in the Kashmir State at which the following were present: The Governors of Jammu and Kashmir, a representative of Poonch, the State Postmasters of Jammu and Kashmir concerned, who brought the dies, and by invitation, which had been asked for, a representative of the British Post Office from the Punjab, and myself as a representing the Kashmir Residency. The carving of these dies was too artistic to be entirely destroyed. They were lightly filed across and the defaced dies were then returned to the keeping of Kashmir and Poonch respectively. The latter [the Poonch dies] were, on my leaving Kashmir offered to me personally by Raja Buldeo Singh of Poonch in memory of the years friendly collaboration"[50]. The 5 defaced dies and obliterator were presented to the Royal Philatelic Society London by Lt-Col. Godfrey[20].



— Fig. 78. The defacement proceedings.



I hereby certify that the five postal dies of Poonch one each of half anna, one anna, two annas & four annas of S. 1937 & one of quarter anna of S. 1942 together with one square obliterator were presented by me to Captain S.H. Godfrey to be disposed of by him as he may wish —

Simla 7th July 1899

Baldeo Singh
Raja of Poonch

— Fig. 79. Baldeo Singh defacement letter. Simla, 7th July 1899.

On July 7, 1899 the dies were defaced at a meeting of the Philatelic Society of India. **(Fig. 78-80)**.

— Fig. 80. The dies before and after defacement.

Present at the meeting were C. Stewart-Wilson, President, Captain Godfrey, Major Lukis, Mr. C.T. Jacoby, Mr. Lovell Pigott, and (by invitation) Sardar Devi Singh, Prime Minister of the Poonch State.

"Mr. Stewart-Wilson produced a sealed envelope containing packages sealed with Captain Godfrey's seal. After Captain Godfrey had examined the seals and found them intact, the parcel was opened. It was found to contain the following dies of the obsolete Poonch State postage stamps, viz— ¼ anna, ½ anna, 1 anna, 2 annas, and 4 annas, as also the square obliterator used by the State before the Poonch postal system was merged in the Imperial Post Office. An impression of each of these dies was then taken in black oil stamping ink upon thickish toned wove paper, one set of impressions

— Fig. 81. The defaced Poonch obliterator in the RPSL Museum. Image courtesy of Dr. Geoffrey Eibl-Kaye FRPSL (Ref. 39)

being given to each of the gentlemen present, and four sets being reserved, one for Mr. Masson, Vice-President of the Society, one for Major Evans, one for the Srinagar Museum, and one for the Society itself. The dies and obliterator were then each defaced by having a deep line drawn through them with a file. The quarter-anna die had pieces chipped out of two of the edges. Impressions of the defaced dies were then similarly taken, and the dies and the obliterator were handed over to Capt. Godfrey in accordance with the letter quoted below from the Rajah Sahib of Poonch:

> "I hereby certify that the five postal dies of Poonch, one each of half-anna, one-anna, two-annas, and four-annas of S. 1937, and one of quarter-anna of S. 1942, together with one square obliterator, were presented by me to Captain S.H. Godfrey, to be disposed of by him as he may wish."
>
> – Buldeo Singh Raja of Ponoch

The meeting closed after an unanimous vote of thanks to Raja Buldeo Singh.

Ten copies of the dies were taken before and after obliteration in black on thick toned wove paper of which 8 came into private hands. The [three square] obliterator was defaced at the same time and impressions in violet ink were taken before and after obliteration[5].

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Appendices

Appendix I

[Douie's original text slightly edited].

Douie analyzed over 100 1/2a. covers: April 1884-Dec. 1885 generally course yellow white paper of the first issue although thin batonne papers were also used[5].

Jan. 1886-Sept. 1886 always on yellow or orange buff batonne paper [Garratt-Adams in his collection noted 'yellow wove battonne or orange wove battonne'[9]].

Oct 1886-July 1887 the original paper was reverted to although occasionally thick, white laid paper was used.

August or September 1887, the course yellow white ends and thin batonne papers are used from here on.

September 1887-April 1888 was an experimental period: Yellow green laid used early in this period, rose stamps printed in aniline dye colors followed.

All Douie's aniline 1/2 Anna color stamps were used in 1887-1888 with the exception of a 1/2 Anna rose analine used May 1893.

April 1888 onward, white or toned thin batonne papers were mostly used, the toned predominating in 1891-93 when a cheap paper impressed with 'Under Quarter Tola' appears.

The 1/4 Anna (1p.) stamp was printed on thin white laid batonne in use by May 1887-July 1887. From July 1887 to June 1888, it was printed on blue wove batonne. The 1/4 Anna (1p.) analine dye stamps were also used in this period. In August 1887, yellow laid batonne paper was in use. From September 1888-May 1889, blue paper again came back into use for the 1/4 Anna. Douie did not have any examples of the 1/4 Anna used between May 1889 to May 1890. From May 1890-May 1894 yellow wove or laid batonne and orange buff batonne papers were used for printing the 1/4 anna. From May 1894 until the middle of December 1894, blue wove batonne was mostly used with a 1/4 Anna occasionally found on yellow battonne. In the last few weeks before the State P.O. closed, the stamps were apparently printed on any paper available. The liliac laid papers date to this last period and the gray-blue laid may also[5].

Appendix II

Unclassified Stamps and the SG Catalog—An Opinion

Most Poonch stamp collectors will discover Poonch stamps printed with *papers* that do not fit the Stanley Gibbons catalog description (See Section "The Stamps", subsection: 'Unclassified Stamps', and Section "Stamp Production", subsection 'The Aniline Rose Stamps of Poonch'). Such stamps will fall into two groups: forgeries and stamps printed from the authentic 4th design stone or dies but whose postal status is undetermined.* For the collector such discoveries are usually both exciting and perplexing; and the collector may ask, "should this stamp which differs in color or texture from those listed be added to the SG catalog?"

Unmounted Poonch stamps can usually be unambiguously categorized as to their texture (laid or wove), but deciding whether a given stamp paper *color* corresponds to one listed in the SG catalog is often difficult. A major problem is the possibility that chemical change may have altered the original color. An additional difficulty in judging whether a stamp may be a genuine uncatalogued Poonch *postage* stamp is establishing whether the paper was used for postage stamp production during the time the State Post Office was in existence. A number of 4th design Poonch stamps were used as fiscals both *during* and *after* the State Post Office was in operation **(Fig. 34a, 34b, 36x)**.

My own *preference* would be to catalog *only* those stamps that have been authenticated as *postally used*. Those shade, hue or texture varieties that have not been documented as having passed through the mail, I place in a 'Status Undetermined' (or non-postal) category *until* such time as they are documented as having been used for postage. As a corollary, my preference is that Poonch stamps of *denominations* that are not yet catalogued but are on papers that are the *exact color and texture* of those already known postally used should be considered for catalog inclusion. For example,the 1p. on blue wove batonne (SG 53) is well attested postally used **(Fig 25)**. The current SG catalog lists only the 1p. red on blue wove batonne (SG 53) and the 1 Anna red on blue wove batonne (SG 54). The 4 Anna on blue wove batonne has been recorded (see 'Uncatalogued Stamps')[5] and when an expert committee has verified this, it should, in my opinion, be cataloged. Genuine 'off cover' examples of the 1/2 and 2 Anna on blue wove batonne paper have been authenticated and my preference *would be to also award* them catalog status **(Fig 34c, Fig. 34d)**.

* Some of these 'Status Undetermined' stamps will subsequently be classified as forgeries; others as fiscals; yet others will be recognized as genuine but previously uncatalogued postage stamps or alternatively will be shown to have served both as postage stamps and fiscals.

POONCH LIES ON THE WESTERN SIDE OF KASHMIR.
It is separated from Srinagar by the Pir Panjal moutain range with several passes exceeding 11,000 feet.

Capt. S.H. Godfrey, who was the Assistant Resident in Kashmir and an early writer and collector of Poonch stamps and postal history noted, "the Poonch Post Office was one of the most honest administrations in the world…." The stamps were issued for legitimate postal purposes to meet the necessity of improved communication with British India and Jammu and Kashmir. Years before their existence was known to collectors in Europe, the first issues were no longer in use. The first envelope known with Poonch stamps was mailed in 1878; the State Post Office merged into the British India postal system at the end of 1894. Poonch stamps were individually printed on sheets using dies cut from either green-colored stone or brass. The published literature on Poonch stamps and postal history consists nearly exclusively of a relatively small number of journal publications and the author's website: www.poonchstamps.com which forms the basis of this book.

The stamps of Poonch are not only collected by those interested in the stamps, their history and exotic locale but also by art collectors who are attracted to their bold use of color and abstract designs.

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